



THE WAY OUT

Strategy for
Survival and
Development

Zafarullah Khan

Foreword by:

Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

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To

Allama Muhammad Iqbal

who has greatly contributed to my Islamic consciousness

ز نقص تشنه لبی دای ، بعقل خویش مناز
دلت فریب گر از چشمه سراب نخورد

If you had been thirsty enough, you too
would have taken mirage to be a sheet
of water; do not feel you were any wiser

Jamal ud Din Muhammad Urfi (1554-90 AD)

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Foreword

Islam is the third of the Abrahamic Monotheistic religions. The Quran cites the Taurat and the Bible as the holy books of the Muslims as well. Yet Allah had sent a third prophet to teach the religion that accepts all the prophets of the Christian and Judaism and their teachings and traditions as a part of Islam, the religion of Allah, the one and only God.

Why was it necessary to send Mohammad, the third and last Prophet? It was because the followers of Judaism and Christianity had, at the time of the Prophet deviated from the true teachings of these two religions. They had changed the text of their Holy books and they had in many instances reverted to being idol-worshippers.

Islam was intended to bring back the believers to the worship of one God — Allah s.w.t. He was not begotten nor did he beget (others). He is everywhere and wherever we are He is there. He knows what we do and what we think.

He, Allah had sent messages to Mohammad, his Messenger. The, purpose of the messages was simple. They

related to the way of life of the Muslims. Everything that the Muslims do is governed by the religion of Islam. He is guided from the cradle to the grave.

If he follows the guidance as given in the Quran he would gain Hassanah in this world and in the next.

The early Muslims did gain Hassanah in this world so that they were able to spread the teachings of Islam worldwide and to build the great Islamic civilization where Muslims were highly respected and were not oppressed or humiliated in any way.

But over the 1400 years of Islam, there came many scholarly interpretations of the religion. And their different interpretations have led to the formation of numerous sects, each believing in the interpretation of its own Imam. The interpretations were so different from each other that each accuses the others of not being true Muslims. Such are the difference that frequently the different sects fight and kill each other.

Then there are those who aspire to be perfect Muslims. Strangely they do not follow the teachings of Islam as brought by the Prophet and found in the Quran or the verified sunnah of the Prophet. They prefer to inject mystery into the practice of Islam. Somehow they try to be "nearer Allah" through various means including getting into a trance by performing a dance of their own invention, or by continuous repetitions of certain phrases from the Quran, or repeating the name of Allah, or by certain rhythmic movements of the body.

In a trance they would see things, which they claim, bring them closer to Allah.

Islam has no idol and no figures or altar to face and to worship. That is because Allah is everywhere. How close He is to the faithful is something that cannot be measured. Therefore how much closer we can be is also something that we cannot determine? But there would always be Muslims who, through the performance of certain rituals, claim that they are closer to Allah. And these people are often venerated by their followers. After their death their graves are claimed to be "holy" and would be visited by "believers" and prayers would be said, often in the hope of some material gain.

Because of all these interpretations we find difficulty in distinguishing the true teachings of Islam from the false.

There is a need to remove the confusion of the Muslims about their religion. To do this we have to go back to the one Islam, which the Prophet brought, and which are found in the Quran and the verified Hadith.

The new interpretations may also be wrong. But the Quran carries two kinds of verses. The "Muhkamat" which are clear and unambiguous and the "Mutashabihaat" which come in the form of allegories and parables, which can be interpreted in many ways.

If we go by the Muhkamat then we will not be far wrong. The interpretations may be literal but it is far better to accept the literal than to be confused by the perceptions of

individuals who, no matter how learned they may be are still ordinary humans and not prophets, and therefore not free from making mistakes.

Any work that can lead us back to the fundamental teachings as found in the Quran and the verified Hadith should be welcome. We must seek to clear the confusion among the Ummah.



Mahathir bin Mohamad

Putrajaya
Malaysia

Introduction

Coming from thousands of miles, the gigantic monsters rained bombs, each one, of thousands of tons. The unarmed, hungry and thirsty Afghans, hidden in the caves were buried alive. The mountains of Torabora¹ turned black 'in sorrow and grief' because of the heat and intensity of the explosives that caused massive manslaughter. Thousands of the people were captured from Mazar-e-Sharif. Some, shackled in iron containers, were done to death because of thirst and suffocation. The remaining were brought to the city fort and slaughtered mercilessly. Children, playing at a wedding ceremony, were bombed and put to sleep lest they should grow up into Taliban.

In Abu Ghareeb² jail, prisoners were stripped naked and beaten. They were sexually molested and humiliated. To evoke the memories of the Romans, they unleashed dogs upon them. Women also met horrendous and brutal treatment at the hands of the champions of the human rights. They called "Hajjaj, Hajjaj"³ but no "Hajjaj of Hijaz" this time could hear

¹ Mountain range in eastern Afghanistan that sustained massive American bombing in 2001.

² A jail in Baghdad.

³ Hajjaj-Ibn-Yusuf (616-714 A.D.) a Muslim Governor of Baghdad. He sent a force to free Muslim women which were taken as prisoners by the ruler of Sindh (Pakistan) when it was reported to him that the woman had cried Oh! Hajjaj ! Helps us.

their shrieks and pitiful wailing. The Taliban were philistine, and Saddam was ruthless dictator but the Afghans and the Iraqis are innocent.

These incidents remind me of Baghdad of 1258 AD. For 40 days, murder and plunder reigned supreme in Baghdad. The world's most beautiful and developed city lay wasted in ruin. The streets and bazaars were stacked with corpses; and rain horribly disfigured their faces. The entire city stank because of the outbreak of killer epidemic and its effects reached as far as Syria.¹ Ibn Aseer records: "I wish I had died long before this disaster. This was a disaster of highest magnitude and enormity with no parallel in history of mankind."²

The Tatar invasion of the Muslim lands and today's situation bear great resemblance. Both have proved to be a great tribulation for the Muslims. Both have shaken the very foundation of the Islamic world. The Muslims are confused, bewildered, terrorized and in a constant state of shock and despondency.

The fact in issue is not that what has happened. The issue is why it has happened? There can be two answers to this question: (i) we are absolutely right, and the West is bent upon destroying the Muslims; or (ii) we are at fault. We are underdeveloped and weak and lack wisdom. In my opinion the first answer is not absolutely incorrect but the real problem lies within our own selves. We have distorted our image and the image of Islam. We have a medieval mindset and do not

¹ Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah*: Ibn Kaseer, (1301-1373 AD) wrote a famous commentary of the Qur'an named *Tafsir ibn Kathir*; he died in February, 1373 in Damascus.

² Ibn Aseer, *Al-Kamil*, Vol 13, P 202; one of the most famous Muslim historians

intend to move forward. We are fit for the caves, not for the 21st century.

We are all responsible for this; the ordinary Muslims; those who hold sway (the elites) and our Ulama (scholars). Ordinary Muslims are leading miserable life. This is also true that they have been deprived of intellectual leadership for a long time. The ruling elites are greedy and rapacious. The religious scholars do not understand the true spirit of the religion and are ignorant of the teaching of the Prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him). We all must share responsibility for this total failure.

We desperately need to undertake a thorough self-assessment and profound self-criticism. For the time being we should forget 'others' and instead focus our full attention only on 'ourselves' and seriously analyze our miserable failings that have led to our downfall. We should also take stock of what is happening to us in the present times and that why is it happening?

I have been thinking for a long time about writing on this issue. During the times of the Taliban regime, at many time, I indulged in very bitter discussions with my 'Islamist' friends about the policies of our 'foolish friends'. A few weeks before 9/11, we had a discussion about Taliban's rule in Afghanistan. The discussions continued till late night and at dawn I predicted that if Mullah Omar (the Taliban leader) did not change his policies, he would create problems for both Afghanistan and Islam. And that exactly happened. This had nothing to do with my spirituality. I just saw the writing on the wall. This is a simple law of the nature that when an individual or a people do not use their intellect, nor they try to understand the situation in which they are caught up, they are bound to suffer.

Allah, the Almighty, operates this system of the Universe entirely in accordance with certain fixed principles (Sunnat-ul-Allah). Here two plus two is always four. The physical as well as the spiritual order has its own rules. It is simple cause and effect. When we break these rules, the Nature reacts sharply. For example, if a person jumps down from a five-storied building, and on his way down he even repents his sin and invokes His forgiveness, God may not forgive him. He will either die or break his legs. Allah's elephants do not stampede their own armies. But we, the Muslims, think that perhaps this system is run by whims and there is no law of nature. We may do as we please but Allah is with us. That's why we are always optimistic that the infidels' weapons would not operate even if we were acting against natural principles as laid down by Allah. This is not just an impossibility, but outright stupidity.

I do understand that there may be scholars who would have difference of opinion regarding the contents of this book. I am interested in initiating an academic discussion on this topic. It is also probable that this peace of writing may give rise to a number of doubts and misgivings about the subject and the writer; therefore, it is essential to highlight the intellectual background of this endeavour. I am a born Muslim and have faith in the eternal reality and beauty of Islam. Over a long period, I have benefited from the Ulama and the Sufis. I absolutely believe that a group of Ulama have played a pivotal role, and have undergone great trials and tribulations just to keep the beacon of 'Light' shining. Whatever religious heritage we have today, it is all because of their sincere efforts and dedication. They are our benefactors. But the fact remains that they need a new intellectual paradigm.

This is also my belief that the foundations of Islam are solid. We absolutely do not need to introduce a new religion in the garb of Islam under internal or external influences.

Nonetheless, in the present times, it is imperative to interpret our religion afresh in the light of the golden teachings of Islam. We need a reconstruction of Islamic thought. We do not need someone descending from the Heavens to guide us and for this purpose our scholars can play a valuable role.

I also want to make it amply clear that I believe in Tassawwuf aiming at Tazkia-i-Nafs (purification of self) and Ehsan (equity) but I do not believe that it is an alternate religion. I believe in mainstream Sufism that has never been a doctrinal system- rather it is a system of soul purification endeavoring for a high moral being. I respect scholars of Ummah, but to me the only sources of Islam are the glorious teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Various issues have been discussed in this book. Some of these issues we also share with the people of other faiths living in Africa, Asia, and Latin America but I have discussed these issues with reference to the Muslims alone. It has three reasons:

1. In this book I am addressing the Muslims.
2. The Muslims have a glorious past but their present condition is deplorable; and
3. The Muslims as an Ummah are undergoing extremely rough trials and tribulations.

In the book, the targets of the discourse are the Muslims in general and especially, the religious elite. The scholars and the Sufis (the interpreters of faith) are requested to reflect upon the real problems of the Ummah. Shortcomings are not to be found in only one segment of the Community but Islamic Society as a whole is at the lowest ebb of its broken pride. Since the religious elite holds general intellectual leadership of the Muslim community, hence time and again

they become the subject of the discourse. My submissions are, in fact, a tab of mourning and lamentation. I do admit that at certain places in the book, I am overwhelmed by the emotions resulting in a bitterness of tone for which I apologize. I request that this be taken as a gesture of love. When the listeners have not developed a profound taste for music, sometimes the tune needs to be sharpened and pointed.

The contemporary interpretation of Islam has been criticized in the book and a case has been made for the reconstruction of religious thought. Thus, keeping in view the sensitivity of the topic, I had sent the manuscript to many Islamic scholars. I am grateful to those who made suggestions.

I would like to thank Mr. Waqar Aslam Hamdi, Basheer Ahmad Nadeem and my other friends for their assistance in the preparation and publication of this book. I owe a special gratitude to Dr. Khalid Mahmood Shaikh for his painstaking in translating the book into English from Urdu in which language it was first published in 2005.

I would request scholars and intellectuals, in particular, and the Muslims, in general, to consider my humble submissions with an open mind and to generate a debate for reconstruction of the Islamic thought which is imperative for development, even survival, of the Muslim Ummah.

It is not that I love Caesar less.... but Rome more. Like Brutus, it is not that I love Muslims less, but Islam more.

Zafarullah Khan
Barrister-at-Law

Islamabad
01 September 2008

Chapter One

Basic Principles of Life

(i) Movement

In 1972, when I was admitted to grade sixth, one of my respected teachers would often read aloud to us this poem of Iqbal.¹

چاند اور تارے

تارے کہنے لگے قمر سے	ڈرتے ڈرتے دمِ سحر سے
ہم تھک بھی گئے چک چک کر	نظارے رہے وہی فلک پر
چلنا ، چلنا ! مدام چلنا	کام اپنا ہے صبح و شام چلنا
کہتے ہیں جسے سکوں ، نہیں ہے	بے تاب ہے اس جہاں کی ہر شے
تارے ، انسان ، شجر ، حجر ، سب	رہتے ہیں ستم کش سفر سب
سفر کیا	ہوگا کبھی ختم
نگی نظر کیا	منزل کبھی آئے
اے مزرعِ شب کے خوشہ چینوا	کہنے لگا چاند ، ہم نشینو
یہ رسمِ قدیم ہے یہاں کی	عجب نش سے ہے زندگی جہاں کی
کھا کھا کے طلب کا تازیانہ	ہے دوڑتا اہلبِ زمانہ
پوشیدہ قرار میں اجل ہے	اس رہ میں مقام بے محل ہے
جو ٹھہرے ذرا ، کچل گئے ہیں	چلنے والے کل گئے ہیں
آغاز ہے عشق ، انتہا محسن	انجام ہے اس خرام کا محسن

¹ A poet philosopher (died in 1938 A.D. at Lahore, Pakistan) who championed the cause of renaissance of Islam.

Being afraid of the breath of the morning,
 The stars said to the Moon:
 The sky has still the same old scenes to show;
 Tired and weary we are due to constant shining,
 Our job, every morning and evening, is to be on the move,
 To be on the move, to be on the move, to be on the move
 constantly,
 Every atom in this Universe is restless,
 What is called peace and tranquillity is traceable nowhere,
 Every thing is under the stress of motion,
 Whether stars or human beings or trees or stones-everything.
 Would this journey ever come to an end?
 Shall we ever arrive at our destination?
 Replied the Moon, 'O companions'.
 O the beneficiaries of the farm of night!
 The life of the Universe springs of from the movement,
 This is an ancient practice here,
 The charger of the time is on the run,
 Being lashed upon by an urge for a fresh achievement,
 To halt on this path is inopportune;
 There is death hidden in the static state,
 Those on the move have gone ahead,
 And those who halted a bit have been trampled.
 The achievement of this move is beauty,
 Love is its beginning but ultimate beauty is its goal.¹

My tender mind did not understand at that time the
 meaning of this beautiful poem. Still I committed to memory
 the lyrics and verses of the poem. The voice of the teacher has
 continued to echo in my mind down the years.

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad; Bang-i-Dera, Chand aur Tarey

When in a Madressah (1975) I started studying Philosophy/Logic, the first book that we read was "Issa Ghouji". Its very first sentence was like this: 'Universe is ever changing'.¹ I found the name of the book rather funny, but its very first sentence made me think seriously about the Universe that is ever changing, even ever expanding. Through 1972-1975 and until today, I have been striving to understand this concept of movement and change. When I am beginning to catch on, something is already changed. After my twenty-five years of conscious thinking and practical experience of life, I have come to the conclusion that change is the essence of the Universe. This is what the Quran says:

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

" Intent on His purpose all the time" ²

The world is never in one particular state. Every moment its state is changing and its Creator moulds it in a new form, every now and then, which is different from all its previous forms.

يُقَلِّبُ اللَّهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي
الْأَبْصَارِ

It is God who alternates night and day; there is indeed a lesson in this for those who possess insight. ³

¹ Al-aalam-o-mutaghayyair-ruun

² Al-Quran 55:29

³ Ibid 24:44

These verses clearly point out the self-evident truth that in the Universe there is no inertia but only motion. There is a perpetual movement and a constant flow. There is no halt or stop. Time is always moving ahead, every moment is new, and every moment brings in a new world. It is moving and moving, it has no obstacle in its way, and it has no division. Modern Science bears testimony that the matter is not constant but is always in a flux. Even the Creator of the change has told us that there is an ever change but only men of insight can understand it. So only the unwise remain static and are happy with the present. They do not catch up with time and change.

Every change, a moment ago, was static, constant and past. The constancy is as much essential for change as past is essential for the present. That is why both change and stability co-exist in nature. It is the eternal law of the nature that elements of permanence and change must co-exist. To live in stability only is to be static and to adopt change thoughtlessly is unhinging. If man keeps chained to stability and does not catch up with the change, he would become a relic of the past, a fossil at best. If he only sides with change, he would be severing his ties with the past. So we deduce from this proposition that stability and change are the absolute facts of the Universe. Their perpetual mutual action maintains the beauty and equilibrium in human life.

This change, in human and ethical context, has a specific purpose and special meaning. It is to filter. Through this mechanism the Nature separates the 'useful' from the 'useless'. And the Mankind is put to trial. The Quran says:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ

"We alternate these days of varying fortunes among mankind so that Allah may know the true believers and take witnesses "to the truth" from among you. For Allah does not love the unjust people." ¹

This verse makes it amply clear that only those would survive that keep up with the change. And those who do not catch up with change are unjust to themselves and Allah does not like those who are unjust.

(ii) Struggle

For this change that is occurring from moment to moment, we have to struggle every moment. Ibn Miskawayh², a great philosopher and scientist of our Muslim history rightly said that struggle for existence continues in the Universe both at personal and collective levels. In this struggle only the fittest survive. These are the same principles, which Charles Darwin³ has described as 'struggle for existence' and the 'survival of the fittest'. We, as Muslims, do not subscribe fully to the

¹ Al-Quran 3:140

² Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Miskawayh, (932-1030) was a prominent Persian philosopher, scientist, poet and historian from Ray, Iran.

³ Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) was an eminent English naturalist who achieved lasting fame by convincing the scientific community that species develop over time from a common origin.

biological interpretations of these principles. However, we observe every day the practical applications of these principles at ethical and human levels. The peoples who do not develop materially are wiped out from the face of the Earth. The communities that are devoid of high morals and manners simply perish.

The history of mankind and the prophets, as described by the Quran, is a reliable witness to the fact that the survival of the humankind lies in constantly holding high values. The Quran emphatically declares:

كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَٱلْبَاطِلَ ۚ فَٱمَّا ٱلزَّبَدُ
فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً ۖ وَٱمَّا مَآ يَنْفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ

"This is how Allah determines truth and falsehood. The scum disappears like the foam on the bank and that which is useful for the man remains on the Earth." ¹

What a beautiful principle! Worthless things, the scum, the useless, vanish. Things useful for humanity exist and the things useless for humanity vanish. If a person becomes scum, he is annihilated and if a person carries profit for mankind, he becomes eternal. Similarly, if any race, nation or religion becomes useless for humanity, it is wiped out. If any nation or religion is useful for humanity, it lasts. Iqbal says:

¹ The Quran: 13:17

هرگز نمیرد آن که دلش زنده شد به عشق
ثبت است بر جریدو عالم دوام ما

"One, whose heart is filled by passionate love, becomes eternal. Since we are smitten by love of humanity, we shall live forever on the map of the world."

The capability to live, the capacity to survive, the energy and the greatness are created in man by deeds whose detail is given by Allah i.e., knowledge, worship, truthfulness, honesty, love, service to humankind, justice, disdain for sin etc. The truth is power and falsehood is weakness. Justice is strength and injustice is frailty. Only those people survive in this world who could develop in them the strength and capability for life by virtue of good deeds. Allah says in the Quran:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ
الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

"We had prescribed in the Book of Psalms, after the reminder and admonition that those of our creatures who are good, will in the end rule the Earth." ¹

¹ Al-Quran 21:105

As Nietzsche would say, whatever furthers life, whatever enhances life, is useful, the rest is rightly consigned to the dustbin of human history. There is even no dirge in the annals of human history for what is worthless for mankind.

This becomes amply clear from the above-mentioned two principles that in this world only those peoples and religions survive who are beneficial to humanity, who have capability to live, and those who possess knowledge, truthfulness, an urge to serve mankind and dispense justice. And those nations and religions are wiped out by the history that are not beneficial to mankind being based on brutality, falsehood, disdain for mankind.

From the very beginning the caravan of humanity has been moving along the tide of time. If the pace of a people, race or nation slows down, the speeding communities leave it behind. As Keats would say: "A fresh perfection treads on thy heels." If any weak, backward looking nation faces a crisis, the advancing nations may stop for a moment and may express their sorrow but then they move on towards their destination. Same we observe in this mundane world. When a vehicle meets an accident, the other vehicles coming behind stop for a moment and then they start moving towards their destination. The owl of Minerva must continue its journey.

This is an established fact that both, change and stability are essential for life. The change is good only when it is beneficial to humanity and only those nations survive which are equipped with knowledge and possess an urge to serve humankind.

The question arises: how can we ensure that we catch up with the change; that we are heading towards good and

that we are beneficial to humanity. To achieve these purposes, we have to undergo a process of self-evaluation and self-reckoning.

Self-reckoning can be carried out in two ways: either ourselves do it or we may allow somebody else to do this. Islam has taught us self-reckoning. Allah likes the act of self-reproach. Rather Allah has sworn by it. ¹ This is an essential ingredient of the teachings of Sufis that every night, before we go to bed, we should assess and evaluate our activities of the day. What good we have done and what wrongs or negligence we have committed, during the day? Rather we should make self-evaluation at every step and at every moment. The Sufis have two doctrines: (i) watching the steps and (ii) ever care. It means that we have to be ever careful and watchful in respect of our every thought and action. This constant self-reckoning is the sine qua non for our survival as an individuals and or a nation.

صورتِ شمشیر ہے دستِ قضا میں وہ قوم
کرتی ہے جو ہر زماں اپنے عمل کا حساب

"The people, who evaluate their activities in every age, are like swords in the hands of Destiny" ²

One aspect of self-reckoning is that we should be aware whether we keep up with the change of time and space and

¹ The Quran: 37:22

² Iqbal, Muhammad

meet the demands of the present age? Do we respond appropriately to the contemporary challenges? This is exactly what the great modern historian Arnold Toynbee calls the theory of challenge and response and which explains the rise and fall of the nations throughout the human history.

Islam has accepted the dual principles of change and stability. In Islam, there are certain doctrines that are 'muhkam' and eternal and are not subject to change with the passage of time and space. For example, belief in the Oneness of God, belief in the Prophets, belief that Muhammad (SAAW) is the last of the Prophets, belief in life after death, belief in the Quran, belief in reward and punishment, belief in the basic lawful and unlawful things of life etc. These are the eternal, immutable principles. There is no change in them. These fundamental articles of faith fulfil the demands of stability and provide solid foundation for healthy human psychology and collective existence.

In order to catch up with change, Islam has given us the concept of Ijtihad (re-interpretation of Islamic law in changed circumstances). It has given the concept of belief in common prevalent good (Maruf). Abiding by its basic principles, it has commanded us to respond to every new challenge by means of Ijtihad. The Quran and Hadith¹ are to be explained and re-interpreted in every age. If we do not find guidance in the Quran and Hadith, then we are instructed to use our intellect and analogy. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) asked Hazrat M'aaz Ibn Jabal while he was sending him as a Governor to Yemen, how he would decide matters? Ma'az said that he would take guidance from the

¹ Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

Quran and Sunnah. Muhammad (peace be upon him) further asked if he did not find any explicit guidance in them, then what he would do? Ma'az answered that he would use his intellect. The Prophet (peace be upon him) appreciated his answer.

Another Hadith is worth mentioning in this context. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) went to Madinah¹, he did not like the process of pollination of date trees. People stopped doing so. This resulted in a decrease in the date crop. People complained to Prophet (peace be upon him). He said: "You understand worldly matters better than I do. Do what is better for you. You should continue with it if this practice is profitable for you. It was just my conjecture. You have to accept and follow what I convey to you from Allah."

We deduce from this that it is obligatory on us to acquire contemporary knowledge and accept the common good practice. The principles of Ijtihad and 'Maruf' (what is common good and acceptable) are tools to catch up with the change. The Muslims of earlier period found out solutions to every problem by following these lofty principles, rather created new disciplines and led the world. We have closed the doors of Ijtihad and have stopped believing in Maruf also. So we have become relic of the past. They gave appropriate response to every challenge of the day and furthered and developed their knowledge which pregnated their activities. We are chained to the past and brag about the achievements of our forefathers.

¹ The city in the northern Saudi Arabia where the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah due to the persecution at the hands of the people of Makkah

جس میں نہ ہو انقلاب ، موت ہے وہ زندگی
روح اُمم کی حیات ، کشمکش انقلاب

"Death, not life, is the life where there is no
revolution stir;

Change, upheaval, the air breathed by the
nation's soul" ¹

Chapter Two

Challenges of Earlier Period

We responded to every challenge in the past in the light of these principles. That is why we had ruled the greater part of the world for centuries. I will only touch in this discourse two challenges: political challenge and intellectual challenge. Then I will quote a few examples as how the Muslims of the earlier period dealt with the challenges and how they transformed those problems into opportunities for themselves. This analysis is required to see where do we stand today? Are we having the required self-reckoning? Are we responding to the changes and challenges of time and space?

A) Political Challenges

Let us carry out a brief survey of political challenges that confronted the Muslim Ummah in its earlier period of history and how Islam responded to it?

i) Monarchy

At the advent of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, the political system that prevailed in the neighbouring areas was based on hereditary monarchy wherein common people had no rights and no say in the affairs of the State.

When Islam came to power it declared that:

- The affairs of the believers shall be settled by mutual consultation.¹
- The opinion of the majority shall prevail.²
- It is binding upon believers to accept the decision of the majority.³
- First consult them and seek their counsel in matters in general. And when you come to a decision (azm), place trust in God alone.⁴

It is reported by Hazrat Ali (R.A) that when the Prophet Muhammad (SAAW) was asked about the meaning of 'azm', he defined: "azm is to consult the 'people of opinion' and then to accept their advice."⁵

The Prophet himself, with all his absolute and unmatched wisdom and divine guidance, sought the advice of his companions on every occasion. He consulted them and listened to their views and counsels. Abu Hurairah (RA) reported that he never saw anyone who consulted his companions more than the Prophet Muhammad (peace by upon him).

This political thinking based on consultation brought about a popular revolution in the world. The Persian and the Roman Empires crumbled down and were swept away by the tidal wave of this popular revolution. Hereditary dynasties were replaced by Slaves' Rule. The history witnessed accountability of the Caliphs (Muslim rules) in public.

¹ Al-Quran 42:38

² Ibn-I-Majah

³ Musnad Ahmed Ibn Hanbal

⁴ Al-Quran 3:159

⁵ Ibn Kathir, al-Bidaya wa-Niyah

What happened after that? We treaded the path of the Romans and the Persians and adopted their traditions and customs and again set up hereditary dynasties. These were, no doubt, Muslim monarchies but not Islamic polities. Revolutionary and democratic spirit of Islam died out very soon. The Muslim kings declared that they were the shadows of God (Zil-lullah) on Earth. They declared that the rulers are divinely appointed (divine rights). Most of the Muslim scholars gave unconditional support to this very un-Islamic concept. Unfortunately, in our political history, we find in most of the books of our religious scholars the discussion about the pivotal role of Ameer (ruler) instead of the people. The obedience to Ameer is considered binding on the people. Shura (Parliament) can only advise and that the Ameer (ruler) is not bound by their counsels and advice.

This flawed and un-Islamic political doctrine had serious repercussions on our religio-political life. I quote just two examples from history. Deen-i-Ilahi¹ was formulated by the great scholars of the time—Mullah Mubarak and his two legendary sons, Abul Fadl and Faizi. About 450 ulama (religious scholars) of the time drew up a formal document that delegated powers to Emperor Akbar and made obedience to the King binding on the public. This gave birth to a new heretic religion i.e. Deen-i-Ilahi. When Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi,² and after him Aurangzeb Aalamgir³ stood up to

¹ A new religion developed in 15th century in India by King Akbar fusing Islam with Hinduism

² A great sufi commonly known as Mujaddid Alf Thani, the reformer of Islam in the second millennium. was born in Sarhind, India, on June 26, 1564.

³ A Mughal King, Aurangzeb, also known as Alamgir I, was the ruler of the Mughal Empire from 1658 until 1707. He was the sixth Mughal ruler after Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan.

repudiate and oppose this new religion, most of the Sufis and ulema sided against the movement of the Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi. They supported Dara Shikou¹ (who championed the cause of the new religion) against Aurangzeb Aalamgir.

The absolute monarchy gave rise to political repression in the Muslim world. Once an Indian ruler, on being offended by an ordinary citizen, ordered him to be trampled under the feet by an elephant. In the evening when the King joined the salat al-Maghrib (the prayer just after sunset), the Imam (prayer leader) of the mosque recited unintentionally Surah Feel², the King felt that he was insulted deliberately. The Imam met the same fate. Commenting upon this type of political behaviour, Iqbal says:

ملوکیت کرتی ہے آثارِ جنوں پیدا
اللہ کے نشتر ہیں تیور ہو کہ چنگیز

"The monarchy gives rise to symptoms of madness, may be Taimur or Changez, they are God's scalpels." ³

ii) Slavery

Islam denounced and fought against human bondage of the day in all its forms and manifestations. It took practical

¹ Brother of Aurangzeb Aalamgir with whom he fought succession of power wars

² Surah No 105 of the Holy Quran which describes the destruction of the 'army of the elephants' which attacked the Kaabaa, the holiest shrine in Islam before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the army was destroyed by Allah as small birds threw small pebbles on them which miraculously killed the elephants

³ Iqbal, Muhammad, Bal-i-Jibril, Ghazliat

steps and measures to minimize and abolish this scourge from the face of the Earth. It taught humanity the lesson of freedom. Let us recall the historic statement of Hazrat Umar, the second Caliph after the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

"The mothers have given birth to free men.
When did you enslave them?"¹

It is a more meaningful and comprehensive statement than that of a great philosopher and political thinker—Rousseau: "Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains."²

Rousseau simply stated the fact whereas Umar denounced slavery and declared freedom, that too one thousand years before Rousseau. It was a crusade not only against physical slavery but it was a Jihad against all forms and manifestation of slavery. This doctrine was very poetically stated by the envoy of Sa'ad Ibn Waqas³ in the court of the Persian Emperor:

"We want to rid man, of man's domination so
that people are slaves of none but Allah."

Complete submission and surrender to Allah protects humanity from all forms of slavery. Iqbal has beautifully expressed this idea in the following couplet:⁴

¹ Ibn Jauzi, History of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab; P.2

² French philosopher (1778 AD), the father of the French Revolution

³ The companion of the Prophet Muhammad and commander of the Muslim army who sieged Persia after the death of the Prophet

⁴ Iqbal, Muhammad, Zarb-i-Kaleem, Namaz

یہ ایک سجدہ جسے تو گراں سمجھتا ہے
ہزار سجدے سے دیتا ہے آدمی کو نجات

"This one simple prostration which you consider heavy on-you, rids humankind of one thousand prostrations."

The process and institution of human bondage and enslavement has far-reaching impact on society. It is all against human dignity and honour. In slavery, circle of human activity shrinks. In freedom, man can utilize its capabilities to the fullest and his creative faculties come into play. How beautifully Iqbal has expressed this idea in the couplet:¹

بندگی میں گھٹ کے رہ جاتی ہے اک جوئے کم آب
اور آزادی میں بحر پیکراں ہے زندگی

"The rivulet of life dries up in slavery and in freedom, it is a shore-less ocean."

Our emperors and kings had no regard for human dignity and honour. They began enslaving their subjects physically and intellectually. Slave trade started and the number of concubines increased in the harem. The ulama discussed the issues of slaves—male and female, in their books of Fiqh² and justified their captivity contrary to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. The clear teachings of Islam regarding freedom and respect for human dignity were ignored and dumped into oblivion. Whoever raised his voice

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Bang-i-Dara, Zindagi

² Islamic Law.

against this repression and injustice was put behind the bars or killed. Hazrat Imam Husayn¹, Zaid Nafs-i-Zakia², Imam Abu Hanifa³, Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal⁴, Imam Sarakhsi⁵ and Ahmad Sirhandi, suffered for speaking truth, the truth that was unpalatable, inconvenient for the rulers of the day.

iii) Injustice (Zulm)

Islam declared and upheld justice and equity against injustice, repression and all kinds of exploitation in the society. Plato⁶ once remarked: "Justice is Virtue and Virtue is Justice". But the Quran is on higher plane when it declares that all the Prophets and divine books sent by Allah to guide humankind were, in fact, to establish justice.

The Quran says:⁷

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

¹ Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; (626 - 680) ; was the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). His mother was Muhammad's daughter Fatima az-Zahra.

² Relation of Hussain who fought with the Abbasids, he himself was killed in 145 AH

³ Nu'maan ibn Thabit also known as Imam Abu Hanifah, (699 – 767AD) was one of the most important Islamic scholars, jurists and the founder of the Hanafi school of fiqh.

⁴ Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal (780 - 855 AD, 164 - 241 AH) was an important Muslim scholar and theologian. He is considered the founder of the Hanbali school of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence).

⁵ Ahmad ibn al-Tayyib al-Sarakhsi (d. 286 AH/899 AD)

⁶ The famous Greek philosopher (c. 427- c. 347 BC)

⁷ Al-Quran 57:25

“We have surely sent Apostles with clear signs, and the Books and the balance, so that the people may stand by justice.”

Allah has not sent His Prophets and divine books like Old Testament, New Testament and the Quran to establish Prayers (Salah), Fasting (Saum), Charity (Zakah) and Pilgrimage (Hajj) but to administer justice and create a society that is based on principles of social justice and equity. Some of our religious scholars went to the extent by declaring that the just rule of the unbelievers is better than the unjust rule of believers.

Hazrat Ali (RA)¹ is quoted to have said:

“الْمَلِكُ يَبْقَىٰ مَعَ الْكُفْرِ وَلَا يَبْقَىٰ مَعَ الظُّلْمِ”

“A state can exist with infidelity (Kufr) but cannot survive with injustice and repression (Zulm).”

In Islamic philosophy, concept of justice is more comprehensive than in any other system. The Muslim scholars have studied and discussed injustice (Zulm) from different angles. According to them, ‘Zulm is to put a thing in a wrong place’ and ‘Adl’ is to put it in its right place’. These very comprehensive definitions of ‘Adl’ and ‘Zulm’ cover all the aspects of human life. The early Islamic society was based on justice and equity. Justice in all its forms—social, political and economic, prevailed in every sphere of the society. Islam established a balance between rights and responsibilities;

¹ The Fourth Muslim Caliph after the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who died in 656 AD.

between individualism and collective life and between citizens and the State.

Later on, vicious political thinking and evil ambitions began to prevail over justice and fairness. Political and social exploitation started. Economic injustice reared its head. The Muslim Emperors and the Kings acquired the services of Ulema (religious scholars) to get justifications and rationalizations for oppression and injustice they perpetrated upon the masses. Unfortunately, a vast majority of the Ulema in our history did not raise voice against this 'Zulm' but instead tried to find justification for it. You will find a full chapter in every famous book of Fiqh (Jurisprudence) on "how to evade Zakah". The pretexts and evading tactics of Bani Israel¹ pale into insignificance when compared with their rationalizations. The Muslims forgot the lofty lessons of justice and equity and adopted 'Zulm' (injustice and repression) in all its forms.

iv) Human indignity

Islam championed the rights of the citizens. It declared that man is entitled to all social, political and economic rights because he is the best and noblest creation, the crown of creations. These rights are inherent in human dignity and are not bestowed upon by any king or other authority. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), for the first time in the history of humankind, gave a clear and concise Charter of Human Rights. We can claim and assert with certainty that the Movement of Human Rights started from this historic declaration on the eve of the last pilgrimage. The Human Rights Movement still continues to get guidance from this

¹ The people of the Prophet Moses who excelled in finding pretexts to evade and avoid commands of Allah

Charter and is still on the way to realize its lofty ideals. Islam has not only broadened and enlarged the concept and scope of rights but has assigned the state the role of protection of the rights of the citizens.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was so much concerned about citizens' rights to education that he gave the option to the prisoners of war that if they taught Muslims how to read and write, they would be set free. The Prophet (peace be upon him), did not fear that these Jews and Christians (the prisoners of war) would spoil the faith of the believers.

Let us look at the economic rights. Once Hazrat Usman¹ (RA) asked Abu Zarr Ghifari (RA)² to explain why he was so much insisting on economic justice. He recited this verse of the Quran:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْغَفْوُ

"And they ask you what they should give. Tell them: the utmost that you can spare."³

Then he said that he had a goat whose half milk was for him and half for the neighbours. Hazrat Usman (RA) asked for the authority for this interpretation, he answered,

اوصاني خليلي

"My friend, Rasulullah (peace be upon him) advised me to do so."

¹ The third Caliph of the Muslims after the death of the Prophet

² A noted companion of the Prophet who was the champion of the rights of the downtrodden

³ Al-Quran 2:219

Once Hazrat Umar said: "He would be held accountable on the Day of Judgment, if a dog died hungry on the bank of Euphrates." This was not merely a political slogan or an election manifesto but a formal declaration of Islamic economic and political philosophy. The Prophet said:

أَنَا وَلِيُّ مَنْ لَا وَلِيَ لَهُ

"I am supporter and guardian of the person who has no supporter and guardian."

The Prophet was not just drawing a moral lesson but reminding believers of their responsibility to look after the oppressed and deprived segment of the community including the destitute, the orphans and the widows. These were the sublime teachings that gave birth to an ideal society based on social justice where people enjoyed respect, honour and dignity. Where the people were not an inferior creature but Vicegerents of God on earth before whom the angels bowed.

B) Intellectual Challenges

Now let us examine how the Muslims responded to and addressed, in their earliest period of history, the intellectual challenges of the time. According to the Quran, the human life began on Earth with knowledge.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ جَاعِلٌ فِی الْاَرْضِ
خَلِیْفَةًۭ قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا وَیَسْفِكُ
الدِّمَآءَ وَیَحْنُ نُسُجُۙحُۙ بِحَمْدِكَ وَتُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ
اِنِّیْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي
 بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالُوا
 سُبْحَنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ط إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
 الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالَ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَنْبِئُهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ ط
 فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي
 أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ
 وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

'Remember, when your Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Will you place one there who would create disorder and shed blood? While we hymn your praise and glorify your name?" He said: "I know what you do not know." Then he gave Adam knowledge of nature and reality of all things, and set them before the angels and said: "Tell me the names of these if you are truthful." And they said: "Glory to you (O Lord), knowledge we have none except what you have given us, for you are All-knowing and All-wise." Then He said to Adam: "Convey to them their names." And when he had told them, God said: "Did I not tell you that I know the unknown of the Heavens and the Earth and I know what you disclose and know what you hide." ¹

¹ Al-Quran 2:29-33

Look! Here knowledge of Adams is being compared to the glorifications of God by the angels. Adam is given precedence over the angels by bestowing upon him knowledge of things. Knowledge is declared superior to prayers (Ibadah). Adam is elevated and dignified by virtue of his knowledge. Knowledge is an essential prerequisite for being a vicegerent of God. Here knowledge of things is being bestowed on Adam, which is the subject matter of Natural and Physical Sciences.

Islam began with knowledge. The first revelation that the Prophet received was:

أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ
 مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ
 بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

"Read in the name of your Lord Who created man from an embryo; Read, for your Lord is most beneficent, Who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know".¹

The very first revelation stimulates the scientific outlook and the quest for scientific knowledge that promotes the research in Physical Sciences. To acquire the spiritual knowledge of God, an evidence of Biology is quoted. After having mentioned the creation of the universe in general, God has mentioned that how He created man in weakness and then

¹ Al-Quran 96:1-5

he grew up to be a perfect human being. He gifted him with knowledge, which is the chief characteristic of human creation. He also taught him how to use pen that developed and promoted knowledge on a large scale. If He had not revealed to humankind the art of writing, all this human progress and development could have not been achieved and the knowledge would have not been transferred to the succeeding generations.

Philosophy was not Muslims' discipline. The greatest philosophers of the world had already born in Greece long before the advent of Islam. Platonic idealism and Aristotelian logic had gained currency in the society. However, the Muslims did not declare learning of Greek Philosophy as 'Kufr'(infidelity). They studied it and interpreted it. Farabi¹ was the first Muslim scholar who became the commentator of Greek Philosophy. Aristotle is known in the history as the First teacher and Farabi as Second teacher of Philosophy

Our scholars studied and understood the Greek Philosophy and then rendered it into Arabic so that the Muslims in general could benefit from it. They also critically examined it. Imam Ghazali² wrote *Tahafa-tul-Falasifah* (Destruction of the Philosophers) in which he severely

¹ Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn al-Farakh al-Farabi or Abu Nasr also known in the West as Alfarabius, (870-950 AD) was an Islamic philosopher and one of the greatest scientists and philosophers of his time.

² Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazâlî, known as *Algazel* to the western medieval world, (died 1111,) was an Islamic theologian, philosopher, and mystic of Persian origin.

criticized the Greek Philosophy. Ibn Rushd¹, a renowned philosopher of the Muslim world, condemned this intellectual stance of Imam Ghazali. His book is titled: "Tahafatul-Tahafah" (Destruction of Destruction). Later on, Imam Ibn Taiymiah² struck at the very roots of Greek philosophy. As a result of these commentaries and criticisms, the Muslims started a systematic study of Greek Philosophy and transferred all this knowledge to the succeeding generations.

So it were the Muslims who transferred this great treasure of Greek scientific and philosophical knowledge to the West. The Platonic Idealism was deeply influenced by Arab Empiricism. The same is true of Aristotle's logic. The Critique of Pure Reason by the German philosopher Kant looks like an extension of the philosophy of Imam Ghazali. Then the Muslims fell into deep intellectual slumber and kept on teaching old syllabi in their Madaris (religious schools) for centuries whereas new sciences and philosophies emerged (in the wake of Reformation and Industrial Revolution) but the Muslims remained indifferent to these.

The Muslims were essentially empirical in their approach. They learned observation, reflection and experimentation from the Quran, which repeatedly says: Don't you see the skies? Don't you see the Earth? Don't you see the animals? Don't you ponder on the creation? This persistent invitation to observation provided incentives to focus on the Physical and Biological Sciences.

¹ Ibn Rushd, known as Averroes (1126 -, 1198), was an Andalusian-Arab philosopher and physician, a master of philosophy and Islamic law, mathematics, and medicine. His school of philosophy is known as Averroism.

² Jurist and Philosopher (1263-1328 AD)

Ibn Al-Haitham laid the foundation of modern Physics and Al-Khwarizmi (1037 AD) introduced Modern Arithmetic to the world in 9th century. Ibn-i-Sina and Zahrawi (1013 AD) laid the basis of medicine and surgery respectively. It is generally recognized, even by the western historians, that the Muslim scientists laid the foundations of modern sciences, which are based on observation, experimentation and systematization. As Islam laid equal emphasis on man and the universe, they studied both man and the universe. They drew upon the inner secrets of both, man and matter. They did not divide life into the life of this world and the life-hereafter. They believed in the unity of matter and spirit. They considered the debate between 'old' and 'new' meaningless and based on ignorance. They developed modern technology because of their acquisition of scientific knowledge.

Then what happened to us? We went into hibernation. We indulged in futile theological debates under the Greek influence. We divided life into spiritual and temporal and regarded material progress and development as against Islam. We ignored Natural Sciences and got lost in intoxication of mysticism that advocated a purely intuitive and esoteric methodology, averse to empiricism, the very basis of modern scientific development. We indulged in theological hair-splitting and futile discussions of scholasticism, instead of serious intellectual discourse. And the time did not wait for us, so we lag far behind the comity of the nations.

(Details in next Chapter)

Chapter Three

Impact of Islam on Human Civilization

A) Moral Influences

i) God Consciousness

Islamic Revolution had a profound and lasting impact on psychological and sociological aspects of human existence. Before the advent of Islam, religion (except Christianity) and philosophy had not left a very deep impact on human life in general. Generally speaking, individual and social behaviour were not greatly influenced by religion and philosophy. Mostly, the people believed that God, after having created the universe, has become unconcerned with and indifferent to worldly affairs. Either they were devoid of fear or love of God or fear and love of God were not a viable creative force in fashioning their lives. Most of the teachings of the Greek Philosophy had negative conception of God's attributes and least mentioned God's infinite Mercy, Love and Forgiveness. And it is an evident fact that no positive culture or civilization can be built upon the bleak constructs and morbid attitudes.

Islam delivered humankind from this deadly knowledge and sick Gnosticism. Islam introduced a God that permeated body and soul and He could be felt in every drop of blood. God of Islam is most Beneficent and Merciful, the Sustainer and the Protector, Peace giving and most Majestic. We have been commanded to inculcate His attributes and dye ourselves in His colour, for His is the best colour.

The conception that He is the Master of all, operates the Universe, awards punishment and rewards, gave a consciousness of life wherein God is a living reality. The Faith began to run in the blood and it illuminated the heart and enlightened the mind. Consequently a pious, dignified and graceful personality emerged that was steeped in His consciousness and love.

ii) Moral Courage

The spiritual consciousness provided the believer with an exceptional will power and equipped him with the idea of self-criticism, which is a continuous drill to rectify one's mistakes and failings. It gifted him with *Nafs-i-Lawwama'* (the ever repenting conscience) that pricked him whenever he did a wrong thing and prevented him from doing evil even in secluded corner of darkness. People presented themselves to be punished by confessing that they had committed a sin. This was the process of self-criticism, pricking of conscience that had carved a niche in every believer's heart. This high thinking lead to the highest standards of trustworthiness and integrity giving rise to piety and decency that was maintained both in public and private life. It overcame temptations and carnal desires. It became difficult for human beings to submit to forces other than Allah. The emperors, the scholars, the oppressors, all looked humble creatures of God. The Majesty and Grandeur of Allah delivered humankind from the yoke of all these earthly gods. All worldly beauty, pomp and show and grandeur of the courts paled into insignificance before Allah's awe and grandeur.

The history also witnessed that an ordinary Arab stood eyeball to eyeball to the Roman and Persian Emperors. Hazrat Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas sent Rabi Ibn Amir as his envoy to the court of Rustam of Iran. When he reached the court, he found it well decorated. The crown was bedecked with pearls and rubies. This poor man was clad in simple dress riding a semi-

dead horse. He did not alight from the horse and treaded over the velvets and carpets. He was not awed and overwhelmed by the grandeur of the court of Rustum till he entered the inner court piercing the carpets with his spear. He went straight to Rustum and tethered his horse to his royal pillow and said to him:

“We have been sent by Allah to rid His men from the slavish bonds of their fellow men and make them the slaves of none but Allah. And to take them out from this narrow, limited world and make them enter the vastness of world hereafter, and deliver them from the oppression of false religions and bring them under the just rule of Islam.”¹

The highest moral rectitude, indifference to wordily possessions, love of Allah and longing for Akhirah (The Hereafter) made them courageous. They were overwhelmed by longing for the Paradise and looked down upon the worldly life and its material things with contempt and disdain. They were so much obsessed with the great ideas of Islam that they became forgetful of all around them.

دو عالم سے کرتی ہے بیگانہ دل کو
عجب چیز ہے لذتِ آشنائی

“It makes the heart indifferent to both the worlds; strange is the taste of intense love for God.”²

¹ Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah, Vol. 3

² Iqbal, Muhammad. Bal-i-Jibril, Tariq Ki Dua

iii) Longing for Death

Hazrat Anas Ibn Nazar joined the battle of Uhad¹. On one occasion while he was advancing towards the enemy, he saw Hazrat Sa'ad Ibn Ma'az and addressed him:

"Sa'ad! By God, I can feel the fragrance of Jannah (Paradise) from the other side of the mountain of Uhad." Then he disappeared into the battling crowd. Ans Ibn Malik said that when the war was over, they found more than eighty wounds on his body and it was mutilated beyond recognition. His sister identified him by his fingerprints."²

On the eve of Uhud, when the Prophet persuaded his followers by saying:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

"And hasten for the pardon of your Lord, and paradise extending over the heavens and the earth." ³

Hazrat Umar Ibn Hammam al-Ansari, one of the companions asked, "O, Messenger of Allah! Is it extending over heavens and the earth?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, do you have any doubt? " He replied that he did not doubt it rather he had an ardent desire to be blessed with it. The

¹ The second battle of Islam in which the Prophet participated

² Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, Ghazwa-i-Uhud

³ Al-Quran, 3:133

Prophet said, "Yes, yes, you will get it". He was eating dates at that time. He threw away the dates by saying that why he should waste his time and he joined the battle and was martyred.¹ Iqbal rightly says:

موت کے آئینے میں تجھ کو دکھا کر زہِ دوست
زندگی تیرے لئے اور بھی دشوار کرے

"By showing you the face of your friend (God) in the mirror of death, He makes life more difficult for you to live."²

iv) Self-Surrender

The pious thinking makes a Muslim completely surrender and submit himself to Allah. He gives up his personal desires and ambitions and becomes God's bondsman and hands over his life and property to Him. If he wages war, it is for His sake and if he makes truce, it is also for His sake. And if he loves or hates, it is only to seek His pleasure.

Fudala Ibn Umair came to kill the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) while the latter was circumambulating the Ka'bah. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) asked, "What are your intentions?" He replied, 'Nothing'. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) smiled and advised him to repent. Then the Prophet put his hand on his chest. Fudala says that the moment the Prophet lifted his hand from his chest; Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the most beloved of all. He further narrates that on his return, he met a woman he used to flirt with. She invited him as usual to sit together and enjoy her company. He avoided her and told her

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Ghazwa-i-Uhud, Sahih Muslim Vol. 2

² Iqbal, Muhammad, Zarb-i-Kaleem, Imamat

that there was no room now for flirtation after he had accepted Islam and submitted to Allah.¹

v) Ma'rifah (Spiritual Knowledge of God)

Man's true understanding of God's person and attributes, his profound consciousness of life's beginning and the end, and a clear-cut action plan to lead a proper life, gave him an intuitive knowledge of the reality which rescued humankind from irrelevant and sterile search for any other philosophy or theology. His energy and vigour remained intact and protected, thus available for pursuing noble goals. The Muslims used these energies in their temporal and religious affairs and gave the world a marvelous civilization, blending moral values with material comforts.

vi) Collective Responsibility

The Islamic consciousness stressed the concept of a collective responsibility. We are commanded to help both, the oppressor and the oppressed. To help the oppressed, is to rescue him from victimization and to help the oppressor, is to restrain him from doing injustice.²

Individualism and tribalism were declared as filth. Every body is made responsible for another and the rights and obligations of every person have been well defined.

vii) Love's Focal Point

Humankind found a role model in Muhammad (peace be upon him), who could be the focal point of their everlasting love and affection. Love is a divine sentiment whose tremendous force manifests itself in thousand ways in this

¹ Ibn Qayyum, Hafiz; Zaad-al-Maa'd, Vol. 2 P. 232

² Sahih of Bukhari

physical world. There is not a single object in the world, which does not carry its impression.

This sentiment of love was lost in worldly grandeur and pomp and show. Humanity remained deprived for centuries of a personality at whose altar it could offer sacrifice of its love, till it found a perfect model of beauty, power and dignity in the form of Muhammad (peace be upon him) who became the focus of mankind's attention and love. One who saw him from a distance was awed and overwhelmed by his personality and when he met him at a close distance, he loved him.

I quote a few verses from a eulogy (na'at) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

بلغ
صنعت
اعلى
جمع
بكمال
خصاله
كشف
صلو
الدينى
عليه
و
بجمال
آله

"Human dignity found its perfection in his personality. The light of his beauty removed the darkness. He was the embodiment of highest virtues. Allah sends His mercy upon him and his descendants" ¹

A woman of Ansar² whose father, brother and husband (who had participated in the battle of Uhud) were martyred, came out of her house to inquire about the safety of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). She said, "I want to see the Prophet." When she found that he was all right, she

¹ Jami, Maulana

² The supporters of the Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Madinah

exclaimed that if he was safe and sound, then all pains and sufferings are easy to undergo.¹

When Khubayb² was tied up at scaffold for hanging, he was questioned; "Tell me, would you not prefer that Muhammad (peace be upon him) were here in your place to receive this last punishment while you were at home with your people?" He answered, "No, I certainly prefer that Muhammad (peace be upon him) be where he is, safe from all harm." They all laughed it off.³

Urwah Ibn Masu'd Thaqafi⁴ upon his return from Hudaibiyah said to Quraysh, "O men of Quraysh, I have visited Chosroes, Caesars and the Negus in their respective courts. By God, I have never seen a King who is so much loved, honoured and revered by his colleagues as Muhammad (peace be upon him) is by his followers. So much so that when he asks them to do something, they scramble for the orders to be carried out and they save the water with which he performs his ablutions. When he speaks, they lower their voices as a mark of respect and out of respect, they cannot cast full glance at him."⁵

In nutshell, humanity found a point to focus their love and an altar where they could sacrifice their high emotions and express their natural feelings and sentiments. The people were secured from emotional chaos. New traditions of love and obedience were set up. The creative activity of passionate love came into play and it scaled great heights and left ever-

¹ Sirah Ibn Ishaq

² A companion of the Prophet who was ruthlessly persecuted

³ Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah Vol 4 P. 63

⁴ He was Quraysh's envoy to Treaty of Hudaibiyah

⁵ Ibn Qayyum, Hafiz; Zaad al-Maa'd Vol 2 P. 25

lasting effects on human culture and civilization. And, finally love conquered the whole world.

viii) Personal Dignity

The psychological and moral factors brought about changes in human conduct and behaviour. The dying humanity was revived and its dignity and honour got restored. Latent capabilities came to the surface. Found a nucleus to focus upon. A great revolution changed the Arab nation, the most backward and illiterate at that time. Umar who was grazing sheep became Umar the Great by virtue of this education and grooming and amazed the whole world by his towering personality. He became the role model of Taqwa (Piety and God's consciousness) and administration. Khalid Ibn Waleed was an ordinary youth who conquered Rome and was called the Sword of God. Abu Ubaidah had a soft heart but forced Herakal to leave Syria. 'Amr Ibn al-'Aas was an ordinary wise person and became the Governor of Egypt. Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas was a mediocre but conquered both Iraq and Iran in war of Madain. Salman Farsi, son of a slave family, became the ruler of his own country but lived in a hut. Hazrat Ali, a man of small stature turns into a great scholar and jurist who became the source of knowledge and wisdom for the succeeding generations.

What was all this? How did it all happen? It looks that somebody spread the network of wires of dawah (preaching) and love in the desert and then made the current of faith (Iman) run through them that lighted the dead hearts and soon it began to brighten the whole world. This greatness, this force was a beneficence of Islam on the humankind. It revolutionized both individual and collective life. It turned herdsmen into rulers. This metamorphosis of human life from shepherds to rulers was extraordinary and exemplary. This unique revolutionary process was to last till the end of the world.

These great men also made remarkable contributions to the collective life. They became the standard-bearer of justice and truth. Their personal desires and whims, their pomp and show and their worship (Ibadaat) did not hamper them from dispensing justice. They kept away from worldly gains and shunned the positions of powers. If they were ever forced to accept any responsibility, they treated it as a sacred trust. They did not represent any particular race or area. They were the well-wishers of whole mankind. They upheld human dignity and honour. Once the son of Amr Ibn al-Aas, the Governor of Egypt, lashed an ordinary citizen by virtue of his being the son of a Governor, Hazrat Umar issued orders asking the ordinary Egyptian to take revenge from the son of the Governor who beat him and admonished the Governor by saying, "When did you enslave the people while they were born free?"¹

B) Intellectual Contributions

i) Scientific Thinking

Before the advent of Islam, people worshipped objects of nature and this was called 'Shirk' (associating others with God). Islam urged its followers to study nature with which scientific thinking and process started. Before Islam there was no concept of experimentation and observation. The universe was an object of worship for man rather than object of investigation. It was this great scientific contribution of Islam that completely changed the history of mankind on the Earth. To quote Encyclopedia Britannica in this context:

"A widespread phenomenon in religions is the identification of natural forces and objects as divinities. It is convenient to classify them as celestial, atmospheric and earthly. This

¹ Ibn Jawzi, History of Umar Ibn al-Khattab, Page 2

classification itself is explicitly recognized in Indo-Aryan religion: Surya, the sun god, is celestial; Indra, associated with storms, rain and battles, is atmospheric; and Agni, the fire god, operates primarily at the earthly level."¹

Islam gave scientific method to the world. Before Islam, people believed in ancient traditional knowledge without subjecting it to experimentation. Bertrand Russell has rightly remarked that the Greeks were against experimentation and observation. Aristotle, the greatest philosopher and thinker of Greece, held that women had fewer teeth than men. It never occurred to him to verify this statement by at least examining one of his wives' mouth. Russell says:

"To modern educated people, it seems obvious that matters of fact are to be ascertained by observation, not by consulting ancient authorities. But this is an entirely modern conception, which hardly existed before the seventeenth century. Aristotle maintained that women had fewer teeth than men; although he was twice married, it never occurred to him to verify this statement by examining his wives mouth."²

Briffault goes to the extent of declaring that modern science was contribution of the Muslims. Scientific research started with the Greeks but it were the Muslim Arabs who discovered scientific method---the method of experimentation, observation and measurement. This laid the basis for modern science in Europe. According to Briffault:

¹ Encyclopedia, Britannica Vol 14, P. 785

² Russell, *The Impact of Sciences on Society*, P.17

"The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries of revolutionary theories; science owes a great deal more to Arab culture, it owes its existence. The ancient world was, as we know, pre-scientific. The Astronomy and Mathematics of the Greeks were a foreign importation never thoroughly acclimatized in Greek culture. The Greeks systemized, generalized and theorized, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute method of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experimental inquiry were altogether alien to the Greek temperament. Only in Hellenistic Alexandria was an approach to scientific work conducted in the ancient classical world. What we call science arose in Europe as a result of a new spirit of inquiry, of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, and measurement, of the development of Mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs."¹

We have lagged behind in science and technology in the present time. Whereas the Quran has laid great stress on observation and reflection upon things created in the universe. And this is all what we call Science. It brings us closer to God. Muslims' history is a witness to the fact that they made tremendous progress in scientific knowledge in the beginning.

¹ Briffault, The making of Humanity, P. 190

The renowned British thinker and philosopher, Bertrand Russell, explicitly expresses that the Muslims had promoted scientific knowledge and education and led the world in Science when Europe was still in the Dark Ages, a brilliant Islamic civilization, at that time, flourished from India to Spain. He says:

"Our use of the phrase 'The Dark Ages' to cover the period from 600 to 1000 marks our undue concentration on Western Europe. In China, this period includes the time of the Tang Dynasty, the greatest age of Chinese poetry and in many other ways a most remarkable epoch. From India to Spain the brilliant civilization of Islam flourished. What was lost to Christendom at this time was not lost to civilization, but quite the contrary."¹

ii) Medicine

The Muslims' contribution in the field of Medicine was tremendous and remarkable during the middle ages. Al-Razi (939 A.D.) and Ibn Sina were the greatest physicians of their times. Ibn Sina's work, *Al-Qanun* (Canons of Medicine) formed half of the medical curriculum of the European universities in the latter part of the 15th century and continued as a textbook to be taught in the Universities of the West up to about 1650.²

Abu'l Qasim az-Zahrawi's book on surgery "*At-Tasreef*" was translated into Latin from Arabic by Gerard of Cremona in the 12th century and its various editions were

¹ Russell, Bertrand, *The History of Western Philosophy* P. 372

² Hitti, P.K., *A History of the Arabs*, ed. 2000 N.Y. P. 577

published at Venice in 1497, at Basel in 1541 and at Oxford in 1778. It held its place for centuries as the textbook of surgery in the European medical schools.

The Arabs promoted Pharmacology and invented methods of distillation and sublimation that laid the foundation for modern Pharmacy. Oxford published Zahrawi's books on surgery in 1778. The portraits of Al-Razi (925 A.D.) and Ibn Sina (1037 A.D.) still adorn the great halls of the School of Medicine at the University of Paris. Ibn Masawayh (d. 857) was the first in the history of medicine who wrote a complete treatise on Ophthalmology, called 'Ten Essays on the Eye'.¹

iii) Chemistry

Jabir Ibn Hayyan (d.776) was the pioneer of modern Chemistry. He gave scientific description of two principal operations of chemistry. One of them is calcination, which is employed in the extraction of ores. The other is reduction, which is employed in numerous chemical treatments. He improved on the methods for evaporation, sublimation, melting and crystallization. It is also said that he discovered how to prepare Sulphuric and Nitric acids.

iv) Mathematics

Muhammad Ibn Musa Al-Khawarizmi's book titled: "Hisab al-Jabir wa'l Muqabalah" (The Calculation of Integration and Equation) was the first book on the subject that was translated in the 12th century and was taught as a text book in the universities of Europe for many centuries. He also introduced into the West the Arabic numerals called algorisms.

¹ Ibid PP 363-364

The Muslims introduced new branches of Mathematics and organized Arithmetic numbers. The zero has a great importance in Arithmetic and Khawarizmi was the first to use zero in 9th century. Al-Beruni (d.1040), Ibn Sina (d.1037), Al-Kurfi (d.1029), Abu Sa'id As-Sajzi (d.1024) etc. introduced Perfect Numbers, Equivalents, Amicable Numbers and Triangular numbers. Similarly they formulated the laws of 'Square'. The expertise of the Muslims in Mathematics can be gauged from the fact that Al-Beruni (d.1040) discovered the correct value of $16^{16}-1$ at the time when there were no calculators.¹

The development of Algebra was one of the greatest achievements of the Muslim scientists. Algebra was made an exact science by them. Al-Khawarizmi introduced Algorithm in modern Mathematics and he himself formulated and solved the algebraic Equations of the First and Second degree. Ibraheem Ibn Sinan (d.946) is the founder of modern Integral Calculus. Abu al-Wafa (d.998) dealt with the problems of the Fourth Degree Algebraic Equations and Al-Beruni introduced the idea of "Function" which since the time of Leibniz (Seventeenth century) has become the most important concept in modern Mathematics. Likewise Abu Bakr al-Karkhi who is considered one of the greatest Arab mathematicians wrote a book on Algebra, called al-Fakhri, in which he developed approximate methods of Square Roots and the theory of Indices etc. Umar Khayyam in the eleventh century discovered "Binomial Expression for Positive Integral" on the basis of which later on Newton in the 17th century formulated his

¹ Sharif, M.M., A History of Muslim Philosophy Vol 2

"Binomial Theorem". Similarly, the Muslims made significant advancements in Geometry and Trigonometry as well. ¹

Umar al-Khayyam (d.1123) introduced into old Persian Calendar, an important reform based on an accurate determination of the length of the tropical year. In the Gregorian calendar, there is an error of 1 day in 3330 years whereas al-Khayyam's calendar had an error of one day in about 5000 years.²

v) Astronomy

The Muslim scientists made a valuable contribution to the field of Astronomy. The proof is that names of many stars and technical terms of Astronomy have their Arabic origin. We quote here a few examples:

Names of the Stars

Name of star/Technical term	Arabic Origin
Acrab	(Aqrab -scorpion)
Algedi	(Al-Jaddi-the kid)
Al-Ta'ir	(Al-Tair-the flyer)
Deneb	(Dhanab-tail)
Pherkad	(Farqad-calf) ³
Naadir	(Nazir-preacher)

vi) Geography

The Muslims made remarkable advancements in Geography. Philip K. Hitti writes that Al-Idrisi was the greatest geographer of 12th century, rather of all medieval times. The European rulers used to ask him to prepare maps

¹ Sharif, M.M., A History of Muslim Philosophy Germany, 1966 Vol. 2 PP. 1280-1283

² Hitti, Philip K., The History of Arabs. P. 377

³ Hitti, Philip K., The History of the Arabs PP. 572-3

for them. Idrisi was the adviser and personal friend of Norman Emperor Ruger II of Sicily. He also worked as official map drawer in his court and made a map of the world for him in 1154 AD.¹ Al-Beruni, while working in the area of the present day Pakistan, measured the radius of the Earth, which is only 15 km short of present day accepted measurement of the Earth.

By virtue of knowledge of Geography, the Muslims gained control and mastery over sea routes and tourism. The credit goes to Muslim mariners who discovered sea route between Europe and India. Vasco De Gama (d.1524), the famous Portuguese sailor, discovered sea route between India and Europe, which went through Cape of Good Hope. This great sea discovery was made possible with the help of a Muslim Arab mariner, Ahmad Ibn Majid, who in 1498 piloted Vasco De Gama from Africa to India. And Sultan of Mozambique made available this mariner to him.²

The Muslims have a role in the discovery of the New World, America. Columbus discovered America in 1506 AD. Hitti writes that the Muslims kept alive the ancient doctrine of the spherical nature the Earth, without which the discovery of America would not have been possible. An exponent of this doctrine was a Muslim scientist named Abu Ubaidah Muslim al-Baalini, who had written a book on this topic. His theories flourished in the first half of the 10th century. The books containing the theory of the sphericity of the Earth were translated from Arabic into Latin and were published in

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica Vol 2, P. 472

² Encyclopedia Britannica Vol 7, P. 761

Europe in 1410 AD. From these publications, Columbus learnt the theory of sphericity.¹

vii) Law

The Muslims have to their credit momentous achievements in the discipline of law. The following inter alia, facts may be considered:

- 1) The Jurisprudence is purely Muslims' discovery. Various disciplines of Law did exist in Rome, Greece, China, India and Iraq long before the advent of Islam but Jurisprudence began with Imam Abu Hanifa's book, *Kitab-ul-Rai* (156 AH) His pupil, Imam Abu Yousaf wrote *Kitab al-Usul* (Book of Jurisprudence). Imam Shafai (d.767AD), for the first time in human history systematically discussed in his book: "*Kitab Ar-Risalah fi Usul-ul-Fiqh*" (Book on Jurisprudence) the canons of various laws, principles of legislation and interpretation of laws.
- 2) The Muslims for the first time started a systematic study of the comparative laws. They discussed the basic principles of various foreign laws in comparison with the Islamic law and also differentiated, jurisprudentially, between various interpretations of legal aspects of Islam.
- 3) The Muslim jurists explained the significance of 'intention' in law for the first time in legal history. The Muslim jurists discouraged the concept of strict liability (culpability without criminal intention). Now this doctrine is well established in criminal

¹ Hitti, Philip K., *The History of the Arabs* P. 570

jurisprudence as we don't accept most of the acts as crime without "Mens Rea" (criminal intention).

- 4) The Muslims provided moral grounds for law. The moral basis of the law strengthens acceptance and enforcement of law by the inner authority without any external sanction.
- 5) Discipline of International Law was introduced by Imam Zayed Ibn Ali, the teacher of Imam Abu Hanifah, in his book, "Kitab al-Majmauaa". Imam Muhammad Ash-Shaibani, the pupil of Abu Hanifah, wrote two books on International Law, (i) 'Kitab-us-Sayyar us-Sagheer' (A Short Treatise on International Law) and (ii) 'Kitab us-Sayyar-ul-Kabeer' (A Long Treatise on International Law) which are translated into English by a Christian professor of American University of Beirut and are available in the market. The latter book is as comprehensive as the Oppenheim's International Law. It is not true, therefore, to claim that the book "De Jure Belli ac Pacis" written in 1645 AD by a Dutch scholar, Hugo Grotius, was the first book on International Law.

viii) Other Disciplines

The Muslims promoted fine arts, paintings of a special kind and calligraphy. They started and encouraged embroidery and carpet weaving. They began carvings and engravings on wood, tusks and bones.

The Muslims did a great service to humankind by inventing paper. Its manufacturing started in Morocco and then it went to Spain and Europe. Without paper, there would have been no circulation of books that led to wide spread of knowledge. The word "Ream", used for measurement of paper, has its origin in Arabic.

If you happen to visit the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, you would see that every second person there is a foreign consultant. Once there was a time when we provided the West with expertise and consultants. Offa Rex (d.796AD), the King of England, had sent for coin makers from Baghdad (the capital of Iraq which is now under foreign occupation) to cast gold coins. On the one side of the coin, the name of the King was carved and on the other side, that of the Arab coin maker. These coins are preserved in the British Museum.

C) Transmission of knowledge to the West

These disciplines of knowledge as developed by the Muslims reached and spread all over Europe through Sicily, Spain and Rome. Gerard of Cremona (d.1187 AD) and Michael Scot rendered intellectual works of the Muslims into Latin and made these available to the West. Gerard of Cremona rendered seventy-one books into Latin. Between 1135 AD to 1284 AD at Toledo of Spain, most of the important classics of the Muslims had been translated into European languages. Robert of Chester translated 'Algebra' of Khawarizmi in 1145AD and Adelord of Bath translated the books of Al-Majrati on Astronomy in 1126. Michael Scot translated Ibn Rushd's books on Philosophy and Ibn Sina's works on Biology In 1236.

The intellectual and academic achievements of the Muslims had a great impact on western mind. For example:

- i. It gave rise to humanistic movement;
- ii. Historical sciences came into being;
- iii. Scientific experimentation and observations started;
- iv. Harmony and understanding was created between philosophy and faith;
- v. It gave birth to mystical movement;
- vi. Renaissance started in Italy;

- vii. The western thought remained influenced by Islamic thought till the period of Kant etc.

The Muslims were humanists and they taught humanism to the West and made them realize that humanity also existed outside Christian world. They studied the Greek knowledge, understood and absorbed it. Then they transmitted it to Europe. They collected all available Greek literature within eight years of establishment of their capital in Baghdad.

A major portion of the Quran has discussed the rise and fall of ancient peoples. It accepts and recognizes history as one of the disciplines. That is why after Herodotus, the Muslims for the first time produced historians like Yaqubi (d. 872), Tabari (d.923 AD), Masudi (d.957), Al-Beruni (d. 1040), and Ibn Khaldun (d.1406). Ibn Khaldun was the first Muslim historian who formulated the principles of historical criticism and developed Historiography.

Ibn Khaldun in his book, *Prolegomena* (*Muqaddamah*), has for the first time in human history explained and propounded principles of historical development. He has critically analyzed the effects of climate, environment, morality and spirituality on history. He formulated the principles of the rise and fall of the nations. It can, therefore, be rightly claimed that he laid the foundations for modern history and sociology. His *Muqaddamah*, in the words of Toynbee, is " the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place."¹

The greatest contribution of the Muslims to the West is the discovery of scientific and inductive method. The Arabs

¹ Toynbee, *A Study of History* Vol 3

introduced the spirit of inquiry and investigative methods into the European world. Briffault has, therefore, rightly declared that the Oxford University and Roger Bacon could make contributions due to knowledge that the Arabs transferred to the West.¹

The teachings of Philosophy and Science, till the 15th century, were considered in the West repugnant to religion. Therefore, the works of Aristotle and Ibn Sina were proscribed in educational institutions in Europe. Bruno was burnt alive and Kepler was awarded punishment. Galileo was forced to renounce his ideas. In Muslim world, on the contrary, a conscious effort was made to bring about understanding and harmony between Religion, Philosophy and Science, which led to advancements in Science and Philosophy. And then the West fully benefited from this.

The Western scholars normally admit that the West has been greatly influenced by Islamic Tasawwuf (Mysticism). Metaphysical poetry of Iran had left deep impressions on Goethe. Dante's, "Divine Comedy" has Ibn Arabi's touch.²

¹ Briffault, The Making of Humanity, 1928, P. 200

² Sharif, M.M., A History of Muslim Philosophy Vol 2 PP. 1338-40

Chapter Four

Challenges of Modern Times

We have come to know that the earlier Muslims met all the challenges of the time with great success. They pushed the frontiers of human thoughts and actions. They held sway in the world and played the leading role in almost every field of human activity. Then they gradually declined and ultimately fell into deep slumber. They lost the capability to respond to the challenges of Middle Ages and modern times. On the other hand, the West, especially the Europe, benefited from the intellectual and scientific heritage of the Muslims and then further advanced it as the Muslims had mastered and furthered the Greek knowledge. Let us see what were the challenges in Middle Ages and the modern times, how human thoughts and actions have progressed in these periods and what have been our response and contributions to these developments.

i) Science

In the 16th and 17th century a new Physics emerged. Newton completely changed the concepts of old Physics and discovered new laws of motion and thus laid foundation for Scientific Revolution. Copernicus and Galileo changed the old concepts about Solar System and planetary motions. Invention of engine revolutionized human life and the printing press made the knowledge easily available to the public. The

medicines, like Penicillin, widened the gap between life and death. In the art of warfare, explosives invented by Nobel replaced the swords and spears. They split up the heart of atom to unleash nuclear and thermonuclear energy. Huge ships replaced the small sailing boats and then came the aeroplanes.

Take the examples of the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan. The jets that bombarded Tora Bora¹ had taken off from airbases in United States of America and had played havoc in Afghanistan without breaking their journey on the way. The sophisticated telecommunication equipments installed in America could catch the Taliban's conversation in Qandhahaar². The Americans bombarded only those pillars of Euphrates and Tigris that carried communication wires and they accomplished the task like an excellent surgeon of the world who operated a patient with great care and expertise. And we kept praying to Allah that He might destroy the Americans' planes and missiles. We forgot that some physical laws that we do not try to understand, govern this world. We do not want to understand these laws.

The West used the same knowledge that they received from us but made a tremendous contribution to this. We remained stand still where we were. For example, Euclid's book of Mathematics is still being taught as a textbook in our religious schools (Madaaris) of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. This book was written long before the Christ.

¹ Mountain range in Eastern Afghanistan where allegedly Usama bin Laden had taken refuge and it witnessed one of the deadliest bombing in human history.

² A city in southeastern Afghanistan which was the headquarter of Taliban.

Unexplainable changes and developments have occurred in Mathematics. Modern Mathematics enables engineers to do wonders but graduates from madaaris cannot do any thing. We still teach the students in madaaris that there are four elements in Chemistry i.e. fire, earth, water and air whereas the West has discovered more than 117 elements. They have split up one of the elements, Uranium, and made atomic bomb. We still stick to four elements. The difference between the West and us is something like the ratio of 4:117 or the difference between dust (earth) and Uranium.

Aurangzeb (1707 AD) remained emperor of India, for half a century. He had huge resources at his disposal. He was religious-minded in the usual sense of the word. He ruled the sub-continent at a time when modern Sciences and Philosophy were being developed in the West. His kingdom felt the impact of this education. Vasco de Gama, who showed the West the road to Asia, had already landed in 1499 on the Indian seaport of Kalikat. The Portuguese had conquered Goa---the coastal area of southern India. British East India Company, which politically established itself after having defeated Siraj-ud-Daulah in 1757 AD and Tipu Sultan¹ in 1799 A.D, had come to India in 1600. But Aurangzeb in 1757 A.D. remained insensitive to all these realities. The printing press had already been established at Amsterdam in Holland in 1620 AD but our king, Aurangzeb, considered it sacred to write the text of the Quran with his own hand. The Holy Bible was printed in Europe in 1455 AD. Aurangzeb, the king of one of the largest and richest empires of history, could not set up printing press even for publishing the Quran. Universities of

¹ Muslim rulers of Bengal and Maysore, the principalities of southern India

Paris and Oxford came into being in the 12th century but Aurangzeb could not do it even in 18th century. ¹

We were so much ignorant about modern sciences that in the rebellion of 1857 AD, the Englishmen had the army of 45 thousands whereas the number of Muslim army was one fourth of a million and still we were defeated. It is because we remained ignorant of modern sciences and technology and the English had modern artillery and telegram system. We would send our messages from one cantonment to another through pigeons and the British used telegram. The result was as one can expect. ²

ii) Democracy

The West adopted the principles of 'participation and consultation' in the social restructuring of the communities. It was decided in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 that the English kings have no extraordinary powers over their people and that the law, which is made by the public, is supreme. It was also decided that there is no concept of 'Divine Right' of kings and the sovereignty rests with the people. In 1762 Rousseau, the French philosopher wrote a book named "Social Contract" and the West accepted his idea that the state came into being as a result of a social contract. The individuals delegated their powers to the rulers so that they could live in peace and security.

All our political teachings have their focus on the powers of Ameer (ruler). Shura (Parliament) is made

¹ Khan, Wahiduddin, Fikra-i-Islami P. 171

² Ibid P. 180

subordinate to Ameer because of its being nominated by Ameer himself. When Ameer nominates Shura and its decisions are not binding on Ameer, why not the Muslim rulers tread the path of Saddam Hussain?

We were the pioneers of mandatory consultation with the people but we started opposing this idea. We dissipated all our energies in opposing democracy instead of reforming it. Therefore, the political culture of the Muslim world today is akin to the culture that prevailed in the West before the French Revolution in 1779 AD.

iii) Human Rights

This was decided in the charter of Magna Carta of 1215 AD that the people have their fundamental rights. Social contract theories of Rousseau and John Lock promoted the principle of sovereignty of the people. French Revolution's concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity influenced and engulfed the whole world.

The movement of human rights emerged subsequently. The women folk began to be treated as human beings and rights of children began to be accepted and recognized. The concept of respect for humankind that was projected by Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his farewell address at his last pilgrimage became practically the guiding principle of the human rights movement. Political and individual liberties gave an opportunity to mankind to fully develop its potential. The man became the master of his own self. Supremacy of law was established. Freedom of expression gave weight to public opinion. Protection of and respect for life and property promoted peace and security in the society.

Human rights movement spread all over the world and became globalized. But we are stuck to the medieval mindset. Our rulers treat their masses as subjects instead of citizens. The women are treated, as commodities instead of human beings. There is no concept of rule of law rather violation of law has become the symbol of prestige and power.

iv) Modern Social Sciences

The mankind made remarkable advancements in other fields also. The scientific and political developments gave birth to new disciplines. Philosophy traveled from Ghazzali to Kant. Experimentation of the Arabs, via David Hume, culminated in Bertrand Russell. Logic started as an academic discipline with Aristotle and permeated in the whole life in the modern age. Poetry, short story, drama and music scaled many heights during the last four centuries. We still teach in our seminaries Umra-ul-Qais, the poet of Jahiliyyah¹ whereas Europe produced Shakespeare, Milton, Marlow and Hugo. We still teach Abu Yusuf², they produced economists like Ricardo, Adam Smith³ and Karl Marx⁴ who revolutionized the discipline of Economics.

¹ Pre-Islamic period

² Pupil of Abu Hanifah who wrote in 2nd century of Hijrah, the books on Economics like 'Kitab-al-Amwal' and 'Kitab-al-Kharaj'

³ Father of modern Capitalism and writer of the famous book, 'An Enquiry into Wealth of Nations' in 1776 A.D.

⁴ Father of Socialism who wrote 'The Capital' and the 'Communist Manifesto' in 1848 A.D.

v) Rationalism

Scientific and social development gave importance to man. It emphasized the significance of reason and made it the yardstick of reality. It purged the general behaviour of man of anger, sentiments and superstitions. It tried to improve general human existence by means of reason. It generated an intellectual and academic atmosphere. Even normal labourers started setting up libraries in their homes.

In this 'age of reason', we continued our deep slumber. It was obligatory upon us to project and promote the Quranic teachings emphasizing use of reason, reflection and meditation as part of Iman (Faith). The reason and intellect should have been our guide. On the contrary, we adopted a purely irrational attitude in life and condemned reason and intellect and made faith fight with reason.

We took the interpretations of our religious scholars of a particular age for Islam itself whereas these were only interpretations and understanding of Islam at a particular time in a particular context. These commentaries were not the sacred text of Islam but we took those for the original texts foreclosing all doors of new understanding with ever evolving time.

vi) Economic Development

Democracy and human rights freed mankind from many shackles and unleashed its unlimited potential and creative faculties to be used for its betterment and welfare. The development of Science and technology gave rise to Industrial Revolution leading to extraordinary human and economic progress. The new means of communication promoted world

trade. The rule of law and banking operations promoted unparallel economic development while we kept on declaring this 'world' as haraam.¹

¹ The perverted interpretation of Islam declares the worldly gains as prohibited

Chapter Five

Present Situation

The indolence and negligence of Muslim Ummah met its nemesis. It was not sudden and unexpected. It was bound to happen because this physical world is governed by natural laws and Nature does not change its laws. We disobeyed these laws and so are at the lowest ebb of our broken pride.

i) Educational Backwardness

Let us look at ourselves through the mirror of history. Islam began with 'Iqra¹ (Read)' and it gave birth to an unprecedented intellectual movement in the world. The Renaissance in Europe owes its origin to Islam. Iqbal has rightly said:

عہدِ نو با جلوہ آراستہ
از غبارِ پائے ما برخاستہ

"This modern civilization, with all its beauty and magnificence, has arisen out of dust of our feet."

¹ First revelation (wahy) on the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was, 'Read in name of Lord who created things'.

Today, educationally we are the most backward community in the world. Our educational standards and literacy rates are the lowest in the world. The number of the universities of a single country, Japan, is greater than the total number of the universities of the whole Muslim world. The annual budget of Harvard University¹ is larger than the budget spent on education by many Muslim countries put together. One Oxford University alone awards more PhD degrees in one year than are awarded by all the universities of fifty-seven Muslim countries. We are 28% of the total population of the world but our scientists do not even make up one percent of world scientists and not even one percent of American scientists. Does this benefit us?

In 2003 Shanghai University of China graded the top most universities of the world based on quality of teaching and research. This ranking is available at: <http://ed.sjtu.edu.cn/rank/methodology.htm>

According to this study, among the ten top universities of the world, eight are American and two are British. First one hundred top most universities of the world, country-wise, are as follows:

America	57
Britain	09
Japan and Germany each	05
Canada	04
Holland, Switzerland, Sweden, France each	03
Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark,	02
Finland, Israel, each	
Italy, Norway each	01

¹ One of the top universities of USA

Look, we do not figure in the first one hundred top educational institutions of the world. If we look at the list of first five hundred universities of the world, only two universities from the Muslim world are included in it and those two are in Turkey. The University of Hacettepe is at No.453 whereas the University of Istanbul stands at No.483. The Index is similar in 2007.

Now we can well imagine after having studied this situation that despite the fact that we make up 28% of world population and we have huge reserves of oil, our universities have not captured any position in first four hundred universities of the world.

Let us have a look at Nobel Prize winners and have a comparison between the Muslims and the Jews in Nobel Prizes winners.

Arab / Islamic Nobel Winers	Jewish Nobel Winers
From a pool of 1.9 billion Muslims; 28% of World's Population	From a pool of 13 million Jews; 0.2% of the World's Population
Literature	Literature
1988 - Najib Mahfooz	1910 - Paul Heyse
2006 - Orhan Pamuk	1927 - Henri Bergson
	1958 - Boris Pasternak
	1966 - Shmuel Yosef Agnon
	1966 - Nelly Sachs
	1976 - Saul Bellow
	1978 - Isaac Bashevis Singer
	1981 - Elias Canetti
	1987 - Joseph Brodsky

1991 - Nadine Gordimer

2002 - Imre Kertesz

2005 - Harold Pinter

World Peace

1978 - Anwar El-Sadat

1994 - Yasser Arafat

2003 - Shirin Ebadi

2005 - Mohamed ElBaradei

2006 - Muhammad Yunus

World Peace

1911 - Alfred Fried

1911 - Tobias Asser

1968 - Rene Cassin

1973 - Henry Kissinger

1978 - Menachem Begin

1986 - Elie Wiesel

1994 - Shimon Peres

1994 - Yitzhak Rabin

1995 - Joseph Rotblat

Chemistry

1990 - Elias James Corey

1999 - Ahmed Zewail

Chemistry

1905 - Adolph Von Baeyer

1906 - Henri Moissan

1910 - Otto Wallach

1915 - Richard Willstaetter

1918 - Fritz Haber

1943 - George Charles de
Hevesy

1961 - Melvin Calvin

1962 - Max Ferdinand Perutz

1972 - William Howard Stein

1972 - C.B. Anfinsen

1977 - Ilya Prigogine

1979 - Herbert Charles

Brown

1980 - Paul Berg

1980 - Walter Gilbert

1981 - Ronald Hoffmann

1982 - Aaron Klug

1985 - Herbert A. Hauptman

1985 - Jerome Karle

1986 - Dudley R. Herschbach
1988 - Robert Huber
1989 - Sidney Altman
1992 - Rudolph Marcus
1998 - Walter Kohn
2000 - Alan J. Heeger
2004 - Irwin Rose
2004 - Avram Hershko
2004 - Aaron Ciechanover
2006 - Roger D. Kornberg

Economics

Nil

Economics

1970 - Paul Anthony
 Samuelson
1971 - Simon Kuznets
1972 - Kenneth Joseph
 Arrow
1973 - Wassily Leontief
1975 - Leonid Kantorovich
1976 - Milton Friedman
1978 - Herbert A. Simon
1980 - Lawrence Robert
 Klein
1985 - Franco Modigliani
1987 - Robert M. Solow
1990 - Harry Markowitz
1990 - Merton Miller
1992 - Gary Becker
1993 - Rober Fogel
1994 - John Harsanyi
1994 - Reinhard Selten
1997 - Robert Merton
1997 - Myron Scholes
2001 - George Akerlof
2001 - Joseph Stiglitz
2002 - Daniel Kahneman

Physiology / Medicine

1960-Peter Brian Medawar

1998- Ferid Mourad

2004 - Richard Axel

2005 - Robert J. Aumann

2006 - Andrew Z. Fire

Physiology / Medicine

1908 - Elie Metchnikoff

1908 - Paul Erlich

1914 - Robert Barany

1922 - Otto Meyerhof

1930 - Karl Landsteiner

1931 - Otto Warburg

1936 - Otto Loewi

1944 - Joseph Erlanger

1944 - Herbert Spencer
Gasser

1945 - Ernst Boris Chain

1946 - Hermann Joseph
Muller

1947 - Gerty Cori

1950 - Tadeus Reichstein

1952 - Selman Abraham
Waksman

1953 - Hans Krebs

1953 - Fritz Albert Lipmann

1958 - Joshua Lederberg

1959 - Arthur Kornberg
(father)

1964 - Konrad Bloch

1965 - Francois Jacob

1965 - Andre Lwoff

1967 - George Wald

1968 - Marshall W.
Nirenberg

1969 - Salvador Luria

1970 - Julius Axelrod

1970 - Sir Bernard Katz
1972 - Gerald Maurice
 Edelman
1975 - David Baltimore
1975 - Howard Martin Temin
1976 - Baruch S. Blumberg
1977 - Rosalyn Sussman
 Yalow
1977 - Andrew V. Schally
1978 - Daniel Nathans
1980 - Baruj Benacerraf
1982 - [Sir] John Vane
1984 - Cesar Milstein
1985 - Michael Stuart Brown
1985 - Joseph L. Goldstein
1986 - Rita Levi-Montalcini
1986 - Stanley Cohen [& Rita
 Levi-Montalcini]
1988 - Gertrude Elion
1989 - Harold Varmus
1991 - Erwin Neher
1991 - Bert Sakmann
1992 - Edmond Fischer
1993 - Richard J. Roberts
1993 - Phillip Sharp
1994 - Alfred Gilman
1994 - Martin Rodbell
1995 - Edward B. Lewis
1997 - Stanley B. Prusiner
1998 - Robert F. Furchgott
2000 - Eric R. Kandel
2000 - Paul Greengard
2002 - Sydney Brenner
2002 - Robert H. Horvitz
2006 - Roger Kornberg (son)

Physics

1979 - Abdus Salam

Physics

1907 - Albert Abraham
Michelson
1908 - Gabriel Lippmann
1921 - Albert Einstein
1922 - Niels Bohr
1925 - James Franck
1925 - Gustav Hertz
1943 - Gustav Stern
1944 - Isidor Issac Rabi
1945 - Wolfgang Pauli
1952 - Felix Bloch
1954 - Max Born
1958 - Igor Tamm
1958 - Il'ja Mikhailovich
1958 - Igor Yevgenyevich
1959 - Emilio Segre
1960 - Donald A. Glaser
1961 - Robert Hofstadter
1962 - Lev Davidovich
Landau
1963 - Eugene P. Wigner
1965 - Richard Phillips
Feynman
1965 - Julian Schwinger
1967 - Hans Albrecht Bethe
1969 - Murray Gell-Mann
1971 - Dennis Gabor
1972 - Leon N. Cooper
1973 - Brian David Josephson
1975 - Benjamin Mottleson
1976 - Burton Richter
1978 - Arno Allan Penzias
1978 - Peter L Kapitza
1979 - Stephen Weinberg

	1979 - Sheldon Glashow
	1988 - Leon Lederman
	1988 - Melvin Schwartz
	1988 - Jack Steinberger
	1990 - Jerome Friedman
	1992 - Georges Charpak
	1995 - Martin Perl
	1995 - Frederick Reines
	1996 - David M. Lee
	1996 - Douglas D. Osheroff
	1997 - Claude Cohen-Tannoudji
	2000 - Zhores I. Alferov
	2003 - Vitaly Ginsburg
	2003 - Alexei Abrikosov
	2004 - David Gross
	2004 - H. David Politzer
	2005 - Roy Glauber
<p>Note: Elias James Corey (Chemistry 1990), Peter Brian Medawar (Medicine 1960) and Ferid Mourad (Medicine 1998) are Nobel Prize winners but are Arab-Christians, not Muslims. Abdus Salaam (Physics 1979) was a Qadiani who are declared non-Muslim by the Parliament of Pakistan.</p>	

There are a mere 13 million Jews in the entire world yet they have received 178 Nobel Prizes. The Muslims number is 1.9 Billion or 143 times the number of Jews. Based upon this 143:1 Muslim-to-Jewish ratio, one might expect the Muslims to have 25454 Nobel Laureates. They have eight and the entire Muslim world has twelve. Furthermore, these eight Muslims are considered as non-practicing Muslims.

ii) **Poverty**

Our economic condition is miserable. The annual income of all the Muslim countries including Saudi Arabia (which has one of the largest oil resources in the world) is less than the annual income of one country, Japan, which has little agriculture land and no oil but it is saddled with one great man-made endowment – technology. Average life expectancy

in the Muslim world is 50 years whereas the life expectancy in Japan is 80 years. Through scientific and medical advancement they have attained human longevity by pushing away the death and we take death for God's will without getting proper medical treatment, which is otherwise obligatory as per Hadith of the Prophet.

iii) Military Weakness

The Muslims have been commanded to equip themselves and muster as much strength as they can to fight their enemies. The actual position is that we are the weakest Ummah in the world. We have seen the destruction of Afghanistan and though, according to majority of Muslims, it was an Islamic State. What happened to it? Just visit Toraborah¹. Even the mountains were destroyed.

The Muslims have some of their most sacred places in Iraq. These are the shrines of Hazrat Ali (RA), Hazrat Husayn (RA), Shaikh Abdul Qadir Gilani and Imam Abu Hanifa. Now the foreign forces have trampled that country under their feet. The Muslim countries could only verbally oppose the invasion of Iraq by the Americans. The Organization of Islamic Conference adopted resolutions opposing the invasion, but see our helplessness that some of its members had to provide to the Americans their bases to be used to invade Iraq.

iv) Political Repression

Just have a look at our political system. There is not a single Muslim country where we can find a political set up completely based on Shura (mutual consultation).

In Afghanistan, there was Mullah Umar's Islamic State. He was a 'religious scholar'. He wielded complete

¹ Mountains in eastern Afghanistan which had heaviest bombing in the last days of Afghan war.

control and commanded total influence. He had no difficulty in introducing 'Islamic order'. He implemented Islamic Shariah as he thought fit. But what he did? He tarnished the image of Islam. One who had a short beard (shorter than the clenched fist), he was punished and sometimes would be shut up in a container (due to lack of a proper jail). May be due to this, they were put in containers by the Northern Alliance¹ troops after the fall of Mazar Sharif ² where many died of thirst and suffocation.

It occurred to Taliban that religious remnants of Buddhism, that had lived for thousands years, be destroyed in utter indifference to a religious minority. The whole world protested against this vandalism but they did not listen to any one. They did not realize that Afghanistan was conquered during the reign of Hazrat Usman (RA)³. Hazrat Usman (RA) was one of those who struck down the idols of Ka'abah but he did not destroy these religious remnants of Buddha. Hazrat Ali⁴ (RA) and his son and successor, Hazrat Hussan (RA) did not do this. Even Mahmood Ghaznavi⁵ who was called 'idol destroyer' was born in the same area. He traveled thousand miles to strike down idols of Somnat⁶ but did not touch these statues of Buddha in his neighborhood.

The version of Taliban's Islam was irrational. They had no sense of history and rights of minorities. They were ignorant about the Sirah of (peace be upon him). Their Islam was the Islam of the 'Age of Caves'. That is why it was buried

¹ An alliance of local militias of northern Afghanistan who helped Americans to rout Taliban

² City in western Afghanistan

³ The third Muslim Caliph after the Prophet

⁴ The fourth Muslim Caliph

⁵ The first Muslim and Afghan ruler who conquered India

⁶ A city in southern India which was known for its temples

in the caves of Torabora. But it struck a fatal blow to Muslim Ummah.

In spite of the fact that the Muslims are going through political repression, tyranny and irrationality, we have no appropriate academic or political movements for establishment of popular sovereignty or enlightenment. Even the parties and groups that wish for change are authoritarian or sectarian and their philosophies are irrational, anachronistic and obscurantist which cannot usher in a new world of light, peace and prosperity.

قافلہ حجاز میں ایک حسینؑ بھی نہیں
گرچہ ہے تاب دار ابھی گیسوئے دجلہ و فرات¹

"There is no single person like Hussain in the caravan of the Muslims although the ringlets of Tigris and Euphrates are still luminous." ²

v) Misinterpretation of Islam

The Muslims are divided in casts and sects. Every sect believes that it has the genuine Deen and the rest of sects are infidels. And to convert or massacre the followers of other sects would be a great jihad. The jihad, which was the most effective means to reform oneself and the society, turned into a tool for hatred, destruction and homicide.

I still remember a Ramadan morning of 1998 when I was about to lie down after having my sehr³. I received a message through police wireless ⁴ of indiscriminate firing at a

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad; Bal-i-Jibril, Abu ala Mu'arri

² Referring to struggle of Hussain, the son of Ali, against political oppression of Yazeed of Umayyad dynasty. He was martyred near Euphrates at a place called Karbala in 41 AH

³ Early morning food before starting fast

⁴ In district Muzzafargarh, southern Punjab, where I was holding a senior administrative post

mosque belonging to one particular sect. The district Police Chief and I went straight to the mosque, sun was yet to rise. The local people were visibly and rightly agitated. We forced our way into the mosque. It was a small mosque where people after having offered Salat-al-Fajr¹ were reciting the Quran. Some cruel, merciless people entered the mosque. They were drunk with the spirit of "jihad." They opened the fire at them and went away leaving behind 17 people dead and two dozens seriously injured. The mosque was littered with human organs and there was blood everywhere. The Qurans were sprayed with bullets. The victims were pious innocent people who had stayed back in the mosque, after the morning prayers, to recite the Quran. Their only fault was that they belonged to a particular school of thought or a sect.

Why did it all happen? I would not hesitate to say that the most unscrupulous religious scholars, who have little knowledge of Islam, had provoked and instigated their followers to do so. I have heard during my administrative service career, many a times, that the ulema of one school of fiqh describing the desirability of killing people of the other sects. I had discussed their issues with them for hours and hours and tried to make them understand the local and international ramifications of this fratricidal rhetoric and told them in explicit terms that they would be wiped out if they did not stop. But they did not budge an inch. Their only response was that the people of other sect are Kaafir, the infidels. Misinterpretation of the concept of jihad has given rise to this type of rabid sectarianism, which has caused killing of thousands and thousands people in Pakistan alone for the last twenty years or so and the image of Islam is distorted at international level.

Similarly, our economic philosophy is outdated and is influenced and dominated by feudalism and capitalism.

¹ Morning Prayer

General Ayub Khan¹ and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto² introduced certain land reforms in Pakistan to diminish the influence of feudalism. It was decreed that no person can hold land more than prescribed by the law. If it exceeded the limit, the extra land was resumed by the state to be given to cultivating tenants. The Shariat Appellate Bench of Supreme Court of Pakistan declared these reforms as un-Islamic in Qazalbash Waqf case (reported at PLD 1990 SC 99).

Not only the sectarianism but economic backwardness, poverty, political oppression and military weakness are also, partly, the products of mis-interpretation of Islam. We have made Islam the religion of superstitions and renunciation whereas Islam is a progressive and scientific religion that has built a brilliant civilization. The natural corollary of the present day interpretation of Islam is the present state of humiliation and disgrace that we face in every moment of our individual as well as collective life. If the present backwardness, poverty, military weakness, political repression and sectarianism continued like this, eternal humiliation and disgrace would be our destiny.

تقدیر کے قاضی کا یہ فتویٰ ہے ازل سے
ہے جرمِ ضعیفی کی سزا مرگِ مفاجات

"It is the eternal decree of the Judge of Destiny;
The punishment for the crime of weakness is
death."³

¹ Military President of Pakistan (1958 to 1969)

² Civilian President and Prime Minister of Pakistan (1972 to 1977)

³ Iqbal, Muhammad; Bal-i-Jibril, Abu ala Mu'arri

Chapter Six

The Way Out

We are one of the most backward communities in the comity of nations. Our political system is still akin and closer to monarchy. Militarily, we are weak and subdued; economically destitute and socially almost at the lowest ebb. There is no respect and regard for human rights and rule of law in our societies, which are sectarian and caste-based. No picture of our plight is better painted than the following verse.

اک چاک ہو تو سی لوں یارب
خالم نے پھاڑ ڈالا ہے تار تار کر کے

“O God! If there were only one hole, I could stitch it. But the merciless tore it into pieces”

If we want to extricate ourselves from the present dismal state of affairs, we should exactly know what our problem is and how we could address to it? That is why I would like you to pay heed to some important aspects of our degraded existence. I hope you would not take it as my hostility to Islam¹ but consider these as humble suggestions, of a servant or follower of Islam.

¹ As it is the behaviour of our Muslim brethrens when someone talks of reformation in our thoughts and actions

i) Return to Original Teachings**(a) True Ideology**

Islam has an unambiguous and distinct ideology that fashions life in a particular way. This world, according to Islam, is not meaningless and vain but it is purposive and meaningful. It has a beginning and an end. A Creator who is sovereign has created it. The Universe is subservient to Him. Man is the crown of the creation and His vicegerent on the Earth. As there are physical laws by which this Universe is governed, similarly there is a code of life and divine guidance for the mankind. If he treads the path prescribed for him by his Creator, he would get guidance and would have neither fear of the future nor regret of the past: "When I send guidance, whoever follows it, will never have fear nor regret."¹

Mankind can realize its potentialities within this paradigm; rather it is binding on it to do so. This life will take a new form and human beings will be accountable for their deeds. If it had lived according to the dictates of divine guidance, it would be blessed with felicity both in this world and in the hereafter. If it did not take heed of guidance in this world, remained forgetful about it and rebelled against God, it would be doomed. In this world, the material progress is generally achieved through hard work and labour but it is wrong to think that abundance of material resources is a symbol of prestige because this world is a place of trial and man is being judged. The creation of life and death is a trial to see how man acts. The Quran has referred to it:

¹ Al-Quran 2:38

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ
عَمَلًا

"Who created death and life in order to try you to see who of you are best of deed."¹

This is an Islamic outlook on life. Majority of the Muslims are forgetful and unaware of it. Humankind is divided into several groups. A group of people holds that this life and Universe have no purpose. There is no concept of God in their personal and collective life. They do not go beyond intellect to seek guidance for them. They think that they are answerable to none. The affluent, the ruling elite, are so much obsessed with worldly pursuits and drunk with power that they think this life is but for once and it is all pleasure and enjoyment. Hence they should seize every opportunity and enjoy the maximum. They believe in hedonism. High morals are not their problem.

There is another group of people who believe in many gods. They worship power and authority, wealth and property, the peer (saint) and the feudal lord. They have strange type of rituals and customs. They do not possess any clear-cut guidance and code of conduct. They have many gods and morals. Majority of the poor belong to this group.

There are some people who hold that this world is full of pains and miseries. The spirit is imprisoned in the body. They believe that all human desires, material comforts and pleasures, rather the life itself, are a sin. They undergo

¹ Al-Quran 67:2

physical torture in order to cleanse themselves and elevate themselves spiritually. They believe in asceticism and renunciation. They become hermits, isolated from the public. They resign to fate. They have divided life into watertight compartment—temporal and spiritual. They renounce worldly links and give up worldly business to protect their faith. They indulge in various spiritual delusions and abandon revolutionary teachings of religion. Normal religious people, in general, belong to this group.

What should be our Action Plan? We must first try to understand and grasp the true spirit of Islam. We should explain this ideology in unambiguous terms and rethink and reconsider the demands that this religion makes upon us. What is our position and status in this Universe? What should be our code of conduct and behaviour? We ought to imbibe the true spirit of Islamic thought. We should be ideologically oriented and practically responsible individuals. We should work for the betterment of the community by exploiting our personal capabilities and seek the pleasure of God in serving humankind.

(b) Basic Teachings

The Muslim scholars, it is generally observed, indulge in unnecessary hair splitting and their conversation revolves round irrelevant and unessential academic and juristic topics. If you listen to one hundred speeches, of 100 hours, of ulama in Pakistan, you will find topics like, 'was the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) 'alim ul-ghaib' (knower of unknown things)? Is he present everywhere? Do the dead listen to us in their graves? Can God-fearing people solve our problems? Is it Shirk to celebrate 11th of every month? Is it right to say 'Ameen' loud in the prayers? What should be the position of our hands while standing in Salah? Should we

cover our head or not in Salah? Should we cover our ankles in Salah or not? Who is the noblest of the personalities? Which Fiqh is superior? Is that sect Kafir? Is he 'Mushrik'? You will find 90 hours of their talks and speeches focus on these issues and 10 hours they may perhaps utilize for real Islamic teachings.

This analysis shows that we have drifted away from the nucleus. We are far away from the real issues. We are wasting all our energies on futile scholastic and juristic issues. All our talks are against each other. We are spreading chaos and darkness of ignorance instead of unity and light of knowledge. We do not transmit the real spirit of Tawheed¹ to the masses; neither we acquaint the public with Sirah Nabawi,² nor we instill in them the true spirit of Ibadaat³. We do not build and mould our conduct and behaviour in the light of the teachings of Islam. We do not inculcate in ourselves the moral virtues of Ikhlas (sincerity of purpose) and generosity. And still we think and believe that we are serving our Deen; we claim to be torchbearer of Islam and declare time and again that this 'deen' is about to prevail in the world. The Quran is very categorical in this context:

¹ Belief in one God

² Life of Prophet Muhammad

³ Worships

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٢٣﴾ الَّذِينَ
 ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
 يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

Say: "Shall I tell you whose labour will be wasted? Theirs whose effort is misspent in pursuit of the pleasure of the world, even though they think they are doing good things." ¹

The Quran has identified in this verse a psychological malady, which is called delusion in modern psychology. We are all victims of self-delusion both at individual and collective levels. We have to take up the basic teachings of Islam in our religious discussions and avoid and give up propagating sectarianism and hatred against human beings. Our speech should radiate politeness and love.

فقہ شہر کی باتوں سے ٹالیں
 خدا و محمد و محراب و منبر

"Everyone is groaning about the speeches of the jurist of the town, God, Muhammad (peace be upon him), mosque and the pulpit"

Our behaviour should be such that if a person meets us once, would keep visiting us; our love and affection assuages his pain. He may feel the freshness of faith in his life. One who

¹ Al-Quran 18:103-4

has not reached us or one, whom we have not reached out, should make us sleepless till we meet him. We shall be consuming ourselves for well being of the people and keep on calling them to the right path, no matter they pay heed to it or not. We shall keep on struggling and praying, one day we shall get the response. Only then, the Kingdom of God shall be established on the Earth.

(c) Rational Attitude

Our attitude is irrational and unbalanced. The Quran invites us to ponder and reflect upon every moment but our thinking is irrational rather overwhelmed by emotions.

The religious scholars of the earlier periods worked hard to prioritise religious injunctions and forms of worship (Ibadaat). No doubt, it gave rise to rigidity in worldly affairs (mua'malat) and forms of worship but it also made it easy for us to decide which is more important and which is not. Just have a look at forms of worship (Ibadaat), for example, it has been decided once for all what is Fard, Fard-i-Kifayah, Waajib, Sunnah and Mustahib. As a corollary of this prioritization, Fard is more important than Wajib and Wajib is more important than Sunnah and so on and so forth. We focused all our energy and attention on prioritization and lost sight of its objective.

Take the example of Salah. What is the spirit of ritual of the Prayer? Is it to adopt a specific style or to develop a conscious awareness and attentiveness to Allah while praying? To cover or not to cover the head and ankles in Salah; to say 'Ameen' out loud or quietly are petty issues of Islamic law (Fiqh). The real substance of the prayer is whether we have

achieved Ihsan ¹ in Salah or not. We have to see whether we remember God while praying or we think about our business. Does God watch us while we are praying or we see Him? In actual practice, all the forgotten things come to our mind the moment we say Allahhu Akbar to begin our Prayer. This heedlessness is alluded to in this tradition: "Many of those who pray, derive nothing from their prayer except weariness and strain."² Hazrat Iqbal beautifully expressed this idea in the following verse:

میں جو سر بسجود ہوا کبھی تو زمیں سے آنے لگی یہ صدا
تیرا دل تو ہے صنم آشا، تجھے کیا ملے گا نماز میں

"Whenever I prostrated, I heard a voice (addressing me): you are an idol worshipper, what would you get in Prayers?"³

I have heard hundred of speeches on topic of Prayer (Salah) but all the speeches in general deal with the legal aspects of Prayers. It is seldom heard that Prayer is an intimate communion with Allah;⁴ this is the climax of Ibadaat; it is cultural act and it teaches us the lessons of justice, equality and brotherhood.

You can yourself make a study of advertisements and posters that hang in 100 mosques and analyse them. You will find issues of Fiqh discussed in 99% of the posters. Does a man with short beard qualify for Imam? Is it permissible to offer prayer in Jeans? Does a man who watches T.V. programmes

¹ Consciousness of Allah: Sahih Al-Bukhari

² An-Nisai

³ Iqbal, Muhammad; Bang-i-Duerra, Ghazliat

⁴ This is confirmed by this tradition: "When performing the prayer, one is conversing intimately with one's Lord."

eligible for Imamat (leadership of Salah)? How to develop conscious awareness in Salah and how present oneself before God, the Merciful? These issues are not addressed.

I relate a personal experience. I was studying in Great Britain in 1997. One day a close friend of mine, who lived in South East of London, invited me to a dinner. About twenty Muslim students and one Hindu were also invited. The host and the members of the family were cooking food for us. According to British tradition, we joined them in preparing meal. Soon after, it was time for evening prayer. Eighteen British born youths who wore jeans and had no beard except one, were in Wudu (ablution) insisted that I should lead the prayer. I pushed forward one of the British born youth of 22 years with a short beard to lead the prayer. He was wearing jeans and had long military boots. He lead the prayer in his boots. I have never offered such a beautiful prayer in my life. I have met renowned religious divines and saints in life but the Salah that I had enjoyed behind a British born young man with a short beard had no parallel. I did not find more captivating and sweeter Qir'at of Imam than this except in the Holy mosques of Makkah.

I do not intend to criticize anybody but my objective is to tell you that real thing is the 'Bilali Spirit' that we lack. We have not struck equilibrium between our inner and outer dimensions. I believe that outer dimension of man is essential because without outer dimension inner dimension is futile. But when we compare physical aspect with the spirit, the latter will take the precedence.

Take another example: back-biting is most reprehensible act. It is a great sin in Islam. It amounts to eating one's brother's flesh. Smoking is simply not liked by a few ulama. Our religious thinking is strange that we do not rebuke or condemn the back-biter. But we do speak ill of a smoker

and consider him bad, whereas back-biting is far greater sin than smoking.

I simply say that we have lost the equilibrium between different things that Islam has provided us. We have disturbed the order of precedence. What is more important has become less important for us and what is less important has become more important. We give precedence to Nowafal (supererogatory) over Faraid (Obligatory) and Makruh (not liked) is considered worse than Haram (what is forbidden). This unbalanced attitude and thinking has caused aberration in our life. Our social and economic life lost all its symmetry and harmony. What is our existence? It is all arrangement and balance. Chakbast Naryan says:

زندگی کیا ہے ، عناصر میں ظہور ترتیب

موت کیا ہے ، انہی اجزاء کا پریشاں ہونا

“What is life? It is an appearance of order amongst elements.

What is death: It is disarray amongst these constituents.”

In this situation it becomes all the more essential to ponder over and with a cool mind and give up emotional approach to life. In anxiety, small thing looks bigger and big looks smaller. We fell victims to intellectual anxiety and nervousness and ultimately lost intellectual balance. We have to change it otherwise cultural deviation will persist.

ii) Fusion between the Temporal and the Spiritual

We have to put an end to separation between temporal and spiritual. Let me quote a personal example. In my childhood, whenever I aspired for a higher education, superior employment or a good house to live in, one of my very close religious friends branded me as ‘dog of the world’. At first, I

did not take it serious but later on when I asked him about this label, he related to me a tradition (Hadith): "This material, physical world is likened to a corpse and its aspirants are dogs." I reacted instantly and told him that, in the first instance, it does not seem to be a tradition (Hadith). If at all it is so, it does not mean as he had understood.

Just think that if we rebuke and scold, like this, an ambitious young student for his desire for material progress, how he would aspire to be a great scientist. Higher education, big business and comfortable life style, would all look futile to him. He would not like to be called 'dog of the world'. He would develop a negative attitude towards life.

Islam does not allow any division between 'material' and 'moral', 'mundane' and 'spiritual'. A new Muslim scholar of European origin, Muhammad Asad¹ has explained the moderate Islamic viewpoint about this material world as under:

"But if Islam does not share the gloomy aspect of life as expressed in Christianity, it teaches us nonetheless, not to attribute to earthly life that exaggerated value which modern Western civilization attributes to it. While the Christian outlook implies that earthly life is a bad business, the modern West—as distinct from Christianity—adores life in exactly the same way as the glutton adores his food, he devours it, but has no respect for it. Islam, on the other hand, looks upon earthly life with calm and respect. It does not worship it, but regards it as

¹ Leopold Weis

an organic stage on our way to a higher existence. But just because it is a stage, and a necessary stage, too, man has no right to despise or even to underrate the value of his earthly life. Our travel through this world is a necessary, positive part in God's plan. Human life, therefore, is of tremendous value, but we must never forget that it is a purely instrumental value. In Islam there is no room for the materialistic optimism of the modern West which says: "My kingdom is of this world alone"—nor for the life-contempt of the Christian saying: "My kingdom is not of this world." Islam goes the middle way. The Quran teaches us to pray:

"Our Lord, give us the good in this world and the good in the Hereafter."¹

Thus, the full appreciation of this world and its goods is in no way a handicap for our spiritual endeavours. Material prosperity is desirable, though not a goal in itself.²

Islam is a religion of unity. Tawheed (Monotheism) is not just a mere concept; it is a way of life. It believes in the unity in every thing. It believes in unity of life, knowledge and universe. It believes in the unity of matter and spirit; the unity of races and tribes; unity of life and death and unity of belief and action. (To live a pious life is called 'Deen'. Worldly life

¹ Al-Quran 2:201

² Asad, Muhammad, 'Islam at the Crossroads,' Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf Press, Lahore, 1991; P. 15

improves by practicing religion). Dispute between 'old' and 'new' is a sign of short-sightedness. The Angel of death only touches our body. Life is not destroyed by death; it only changes its form.

The Quran says:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا
مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"O yeh who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday, hasten earnestly to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business. This is best for you if ye but knew. And when the prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah"¹

Here Allah is instructing us that when we finish our prayer, we should go out to seek livelihood. The Quran has called seeking livelihood 'Fadlullah', the bounty of Allah. What an appreciation for struggle for life!

It was Jews' practice to specify Saturday only for worship. They would not do any business on this day. Here going out in search of livelihood, after having finished Friday Prayer² (Salah-ul-Jummah) is called worship (Ibadah) in Islam.

¹ Al-Quran 62:10

² Friday is, in some respects, equivalent to Saturday

After Friday prayer, we have not been ordained to sit in the mosque to remember Allah.

We have abandoned Islamic concept of Deen and instead adopted concept of Renunciation and stoicism. We have divided life into watertight compartments—the temporal and the spiritual. We cannot renounce the temporal. We have to live in this world and for that, we have to harness nature and its forces.

I quote a few examples to illustrate my point. Hazrat Abdur Rahman Ibn Auf (R.A)¹ when died he left behind gold, which was cut into pieces by an axe and distributed. Imam Abu Hanifa was a great cloth merchant of his times. Rather I claim that there was not a single Muslim scholar or scientist who did not engage himself in one or the other business or trade. The Prophet himself has unequivocally put an end to the division between the temporal and the spiritual, long ago, when the Quran itself taught us to recite the following invocation:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً

وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

“Give us of good in the world, O Lord, and give us of good in the life to come”.²

¹ He was one of the ten companions of the Prophet who were given tidings of Paradise in his life time

² Al-Quran 2:201

What should be the mutual relationship between 'material world' and 'deen'. A beautiful house, a luxurious car, a big business, gold and silver are not, in fact, 'world' but 'world' is the one that makes one heedless and negligent of Allah. It simply means that if a person gets up at midnight to offer 'Tahajud' prayer but he nourishes greed for material things in life, he is heedless and neglectful of God. And if person owns a big splendid house worth millions, drives a Mercedes car, but is inclined to Allah and remembers Him all the times, he is 'other-worldly' and pious man.

I have seen people apparently men of the 'world' from top to toe but on discovery found them most God-fearing and God-conscious. On the contrary, I have met men apparently 'men of religion' but, in fact, found them obsessed with material things and worldly pursuits and they are neglectful of God in spite of their pretensions to be religious people.

Let us consider the similitude of a sailing boat. The water is essential for a boat. If it keeps sailing in water, it is good but if water enters the boat, it would sink. The material world is likened to water and boat is to life. If the boat of life keeps sailing in the water of world, it is good but if the water of the world (greed for material wealth) enters the boat of life, it would perish.

We should not teach the bifurcation of life into the 'temporal' and the 'spiritual'. By this the right thinking people isolate themselves and are cut off from the main stream to protect their faith. If they stay, they work half-heartedly. The 'world' is handed over to the 'Dogs of the world', in the real sense of the words. The religious people are, then, more hurt and at some time, the religious class is at the mercy of the worldly people even to perform their rituals. We should

correct our thinking. Unless we correct our thinking, we cannot progress.

Sometime I am amused at our self-contradictions. On the one hand, we boast of our splendid past and all its worldly pomp and show, on the other, we preach renunciation and asceticism, which has, otherwise, no justification in Islam.

If we do not conquer the world and subdue it, we should be awed by its grandeur and magnanimity. We believe it or not, our actions would be witness to the fact that we are 'men of the world' but have pretensions to be religious men, to be otherworldly.

This unity of the 'temporal' and the 'spiritual' is very fundamental. We have to put an end to the concept of duality. Without this unity, we have been left out of the race of the present time. If we do not correct and reform ourselves, we would be consigned to history and will be remembered as relic from the past.

(iii) Consultative System of Government

It is very essential to reform political system. We cannot bring about any reform in our political system unless we change our political thinking. In the books of our ulama, right from the Umayyad Dynasty to the present day, we find the following discussions: what is the relative importance and powers of ruler (Amir) and the Consultative Assembly (Shura); which of the two is more important? Does Shura represent the people or it would be selected by the Ameer ?

The tilt of political thinking, in general, is towards the Amir. They hold that Amir is more important than Shura. Shura only can give counsel and its counsel is not binding on

the Amir. The Amir has the right to select Shura of his own choice.

You just ponder over this point that is it not pure monarchy or dictatorship? Once an ambitious person takes over as Amir and forms Shura of his own choice and consults them now and then and makes decision using his own discretion and then claims that: God has appointed him; would remain in power till God wishes, for He exalts whom He pleases and debases whom He wills; the Ameer has Allah's blessings and Allah guides him; he is shadow of Allah on earth; he who obeys him, obeys Allah and he who insults him, insults Allah.

This is the distorted interpretation that our Kings and rulers projected to usurp power and perpetuate their rule. My honest and considered opinion is that there is no justification whatsoever for this thinking at all in Islam.

Although this general thinking still persists, a few amongst Ulama and some religious parties have started challenging this thought. A few examples, in this context, would suffice. When Pakistan came into being in 1947, a debate about as to what should be political system of Islam ensued¹. Against this backdrop, the Objectives Resolution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly in 1949. This Resolution had the support of Ulama of all schools of thought and it is acceptable to all religious parties till today. This Resolution enshrines the true Islamic concept of Sovereignty i.e. the real sovereign in the universe is Allah. He has delegated His powers to the state of Pakistan. The people of Pakistan will exercise these powers. And these sovereign powers are a

¹ As Pakistan was created in the name of Islam

sacred trust. The state will exercise these powers through the elected representatives of the people. There would be democracy, equality, freedom, tolerance and social justice. Under this system, the rights of minorities, the fundamental rights would be protected.

You just reflect upon this Resolution. Sovereign powers are not meant for any King, President, Prime Minister or any Amir-al-Momineen but are delegated by Allah to the people of Pakistan who would exercise these powers through their elected representatives. It was the joint declaration by the senior ulama and political leaders that the real sovereigns are the people who would gain power through elections. They would not enjoy any divine rights and there would be no Amir-al-Momineen without their consent and no ruler is authorized to form Shura of his own choice. No body has the right to usurp power by means of wealth, tribe or at gunpoint.

It is commendable that Mutthidah Majlis e Ammal (MMA: religious parties' political alliance formed in 2005) of Pakistan claims to represent this thinking. They talk of the supremacy of the Parliament elected through popular vote. I am not representing Muttahida Majlis Amal but simply stating that the thinking of Islamic forces has evolved. Here the general consensus is that Islamic political philosophy considers people the real sovereign power instead of the ruler. The earlier Caliphs of Islam were always accountable to the people. They were answerable to the Parliament of the day, whatever rudimentary form of Parliament it was.

After having referred to Objectives Resolution, I would like to quote examples of Turkey and Iran where the Muslim governments were installed by somewhat popular vote. Same is the political philosophy of the Islamic political parties or

groups of Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Tunis, Algeria, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The concept of the popular sovereignty of the people which Islam has given us for fourteen hundred years, and which the West had adopted only in the 16th century, could not be fully incorporated in our political consciousness. In most of the Muslim countries, the rulers have usurped the power against the will of their people. They claim that God has given them the power and sometimes our Islamic friends support them in one form or the other.

The Muslims now should make firm decision that they would strive for popular sovereignty and sever their relationship whatsoever with the Establishment. They should take the revolutionary course and lead the public. They should speak the language of the masses and stay away from the rulers and the power. They should play the role of Abu Zarr Ghaffaari¹ and Imaam Hussain². Our role models should be Zayad Nafs Zakiyah, Ibn Taiymia, Mujaddid Alif Thani, Sanusi, Naursi, Shabbeer Ahmad Usmani, Maududi and Khomaeni³. The impression about the religious people that they have feudal thinking, and they always side with the Establishment, must go.

The Islamists should also take into consideration that every ambitious, and slogan monger of Islam, does not

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- ¹ Companion of the Prophet who championed the cause of the poor in early period of Islam.
 - ² Son of Ali and Fatima-the daughter of the Prophet, who stood up against the political repression of the Umayyad and was martyred in 41 AH at Karbala, Iraq.
 - ³ These are some of the stars from the galaxy of Muslim luminaries who struggled for the establishment of a true Islamic state.

represent Islam. The 'Iron Man' of Pakistan, General Zia ul Haq¹ or General Basheer of Sudan did not represent Islam but they were men of Establishment who usurped power against the will of the people. They seized power at gunpoint and used the slogan of Islam to perpetuate their rule. But, unfortunately, the Islamist forces supported them.

The Muslims have always been victims of a psychological helplessness. They supported every adventurer who raised the slogan of Islam. They should convert their helplessness into strength by the support of the masses. They should no more side with the Establishment, directly or indirectly. They should not be cause or source of strength and stability for them. On the contrary, they should have masses behind them at every critical moment of public life, no matter what temporary loss they suffer. They should gain the credibility of the people, which would, ultimately, be beneficial to them. It works. We know the examples of Turkey and Iran where Islamic forces have come to power through popular vote in spite of the opposition of the whole world.

You have observed that MMA, the religious alliance, of Pakistan has again shown shortsightedness on the issue of 17th Amendment² in the Constitution of Pakistan, which was introduced by the Army and supported by it. It is through their support that the Military government is in power. They have strengthened the Establishment to gain temporary

¹ Military President of Pakistan from 1977 to 1985, who introduced certain measures for the 'Islamization' of the society and state.

² Military government introduced sweeping amendments in the Constitution. If MMA has not supported this amendment in 2004, the General Pervez Musharraf has to shed military uniform

objectives. And they are losing their credibility and will lose in the final analysis.

This should also be taken care of by the Islamists that after coming into power, the country must be ruled by the people in general. It should not be monopolized by any individual or a particular group. Take the example of Afghanistan, its experiment has completely failed and it became the laughing stock of the world community. It happened because political thinking was purely orthodox and monarchical, where one man (Amir) or a clique decides the fate of the whole nation.

To some extent, the same situation prevails in Iran where a system of Villayat-e-Faqih (the rule of the imminent jurist) has been imposed wherein the top clergyman supported by a Majlis-e-Khabargaan (Guardian Council) rules. If ulama in Iran do not completely transfer sovereign powers to people, they would witness another revolution in a few years which would be hostile to the Villayat-e-Faqih. Consequently, there would be either a popular government or it would be again under an imperialist rule.

Look at Saudi Arabia from where Islam originated and where we have our holy places. It is ruled by a hereditary monarchy. The people do not have any say in the affairs of the government. Most of Ulama are the protectors of that monarchy. And those who oppose the monarchy are beheaded on the verdicts of Ulama.

I relate to you a story from the Quran. Some one thousand years before Jesus, Yemen was ruled by a Queen named Sheebah (Saba). They were the most cultured and affluent people of the time. They built dams to hold rain water and because of their specific geographical location, they

controlled all the trade between Middle East, Africa and Asia. When the armies of King Solomon¹ besieged her kingdom, she called for her nobles and courtiers and asked every one of them, one and the same question: what should be our response? Should we fight or surrender? The Quran has quoted the answer of her nobles:

قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأُولُوا بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ
إِلَيْكَ فَأَنْظِرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ

"We are men of valour, brave fighters. It is for you to decide. So consider what you should command."²

The Queen said in her speech:

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا
وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

"Kings when enter a country, despoil it, and make the noblest of its people it's meanest. Thus do they behave."³

In my opinion it is the most meaningful statement about the role of kingship and military take over in the known

¹ Called Prophet Sulaimaan (peace be upon him) in the Quran

² Al-Quran 27:33

³ bid 27:34

political history or philosophy. Allama Asad while interpreting this ayah says:

“In this context—as pointed out by all classical commentators—the term ‘dukhul’ (enter) undoubtedly connotes “entering by force (anwatan)”¹, whether it be by armed invasion or by usurpation of political power from within the country. (The term maluk, (lit., “Kings”), may be understood to denote also persons who, while not being “Kings” in the conventional sense of the word, wrongfully seize and forcibly hold absolute power over their subjects.”

Syed Mawdudi² holds that the usurpers do this to render the community weak and helpless so that no body could stand up to them. They subject them to humiliation and disgrace and promote among them the culture of sycophancy and spying. ‘Fasad’ (corruption, despoiling) and “Azellah” (humiliation and disgrace), the terms used in this verse, are very comprehensive one. The Quran has beautifully and comprehensively depicted the mentality and attitude of the usurpers and their demeaning tactics by using these two words.

Consider yourself what had happened to the general Muslims during last millennium at the hands of their own ‘caliphs’, Amirs, Kings etc and the colonial masters. The Umayyad, the Abbasids, the Fatimids, the Ottomans, the Mughuls, all were usurpers bent upon despoiling the very fabric of our society and stifling the liberty, equality and

¹ Asad, Muhammad; *The Message of the Quran*, footnote P. 580

² Tafheem-ul-Quran

fraternity espoused by the Islam. Similarly, the colonial masters, the Dutch, the British, the Italians, the French, spread corruption and promoted the culture of humiliating people in their colonies.

Another interesting aspect of this foregoing discussion is that whenever we speak against any Muslim dictator or monarch or criticize writings of those Muslim scholars who have supported monarchy; it is taken for hostility to Islam. This inter-wovenness of monarchical dispensation (malukiat) and the priesthood (mullaeeat) evolved to perpetuate their class interests but at the cost of the Muslim who groaned and are still groaning in the shackles of political repression, religious oppression, poverty and helplessness.

(iv) A New Religious Education System

Our religious education system needs to be revamped, rather totally changed. Its curricula and method of teaching needs urgent attention and rectification. But we are very touchy about this issue. I want to make it clear right in the beginning that I am an advocate and supporter of Madaris and have myself studied in a madarissah. All religious sciences have been transferred to us through these Madaris. The ulama have always been source of great strength for Islam. They went through extremely hard times to set up brilliant traditions in the Muslim world. But the circumstances and conditions have now changed. And we have to change ourselves to catch up with the time. In this context a few suggestions are put forward for deliberations.

(a) Emphasis on the Quran

The Quran is the word of Allah and the greatest treasure of wisdom but it is not properly taught in the Madaris. Only some of its translation is taught along with a

short book of exegesis (Tafseer of Jalalain). Besides, one section of Tafseer Baidawi is taught in the Madaris of Sub-Continent. But the question is: does the Quran deserve such a short space in the whole lengthy syllabus?

Jalalain, no doubt is a short but an excellent exegesis but it was written in the mid of 9th century Hijri. Every book carries the influence and impact of the socio-political and economic thinking and diction of its time. We should prescribe some contemporary tafseer for the students.

More time and attention is given to Hadith and Fiqh (Islamic Law) as compared to the Quran. At least seven books of Hadith are included in the syllabus. Fiqh is also taught for four years. The irony is that while teaching the Quran and Hadith, all time is spent on proving the superiority of one's legal school of thought over the other. Little thought is given to the beauty of eternal teachings of the Quran and Hadith. We should teach the Quran first then Hadith and then lastly Fiqh so that we could learn Hadith in the light of the Quran and Fiqh in the light of the Quran and Hadith. But we have turned upside down the order of precedence. We first teach Fiqh that too from a viewpoint of a particular legal school of thought. Then we teach Hadith, in the light of that Fiqh where we find nothing except our affirmation of that particular school of Fiqh. In Hadith we teach genuine, authentic traditions along with fabricated ones. Lastly we teach Quran in the light of Hadith and fiqh. Similar treatment is meted out to the Quran when we teach it with the help of biblical stories and narrations¹ The result is obvious.

¹ Israeeliyaat

گلا تو گھونٹ دیا اہل مدرسہ نے تیرا
کہاں سے آئے صدا ، لا الہ الا اللہ

"You have been strangled by the people of Madaris. From where can come the voice of La ila ha il lallah." ¹

(b) Replacing Old Syllabus

The Madaris have prescribed very outdated books of various disciplines. They teach Logic which is at least 800 years old. It is all based on the Aristotle's logic. No doubt it was the best Logic of its time but now it has outlived its utility. The human sciences have developed during the last two thousand years but we are trapped in the intellectual logjam. New initiative is needed to break this deadlock of thought process. The books, which were written 800 years ago, are still in the syllabi of Madaris whereas after 16th century, modern Logic has become part of our modern academic terminology.

They teach Mathematics of Euclid who had lived as a great mathematician before Jesus Christ. Its modern version or a new Mathematics, evolved on the principles of Euclid, is taught at Intermediate level today in Pakistani schools. The students of our schools after doing their Intermediate level, get admission in Engineering colleges to become engineers but the students of Madaris who have studied Euclid do not and cannot qualify for any job. It is because the Mathematics of Intermediate level has incorporated in it the modern contributions in the field of Mathematics but we out of respect for Euclid have not changed or added to it any new thing and

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad; Bal-i-Jibril Part 2

still teach the same Mathematics of two thousand five hundred years ago.

The same is the case of literature. The literature that is taught in Madaris belongs to pre-Islamic period (Jahiliyah) and Abbaside periods. We are not conversant with the literature of the Middle Ages and modern period or contemporary one. In other words, we read Wali Dakni and Khusru but we don't know about Ghalib, Iqbal and Faiz¹ or we read Homer and Sophocles but do not read Shakespeare, Dickens, Wordsworth and Keats.²

Similarly, we still teach Astronomy of Ptolemy, of Greek period. Galileo, Copernicus and Newton have changed the very basic concepts about the Earth and the universe. Before them, it was held that Earth is the centre of the universe and now the Sun is the centre of the Solar System and not the Universe. We still live in an era of two thousand years ago. And we still don't believe that human beings have landed at the Moon because it is in the fourth Heavens and no body can cross the Heavens.

The present syllabus of Deeni Madaris called 'Dars-i-Nizami', prevalent in India, Pakistan, Bangala Desh, Afghanistan, (and most of the madaris in other part of the world which are under the influence of Madaris of these areas) is attributed to its compiler named Mullah Nizam-ud-din who lived in a village Sihali situated near Luknow, India. His lineage goes back to renowned companion of the Prophet, Hazrat Ayyub Ansari. He died in 1116 A.H. H was the father of Abdul Ali, Bahr-ul-ulum and the contemporary of Shah Wali-ul-ullah (1762). His madressah Sihali, later on developed

¹ Modern poets of Urdu

² Modern literary giants of the English literature

into madressah Farangi Mahal which played a prominent role in the academic and political history of India.

Mullah Nizami prescribed the classics of every discipline of the time. We here briefly record the names of books of different subjects prescribed by him for the students of Dars-i-Nizami, their authors and the dates of their deaths so that you can see how old these books are:

Grammar

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Mufasssal	Jaarullah Zemakhsharey	538 A.H
Al-Kafiyah	Jamal-ud-Din Al-Hajib	646 A.H
Sharah-ul-Fawaed Alziyaeeyah	Nooruddin -ul-Jami	898 A.H
Al-Khulaasah	Jamal-ud-Din Taafi	672 A.H
Al-Shafiyah	Jamal-ud-Din Al-Hajib	672 A.H

Rhetoric

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Talkheesul- Miftah	Shams-u-Din Al- Qazveni Al-Khateeb	739 A.H
Al- Mukhtasar and Al-Mutawwal	Saad-ud-Din Taftazaani	792 A.H

These books were written in 6th to 8th century and we live in the 15th century of Hijrah. These books, no doubt, are classics but we need some new books as well to keep abreast of linguistic developments. Language and literature are living things; so these keep on changing and we are not, to our peril, adapting to the change, which is the essence of the survival.

Exegesis of the Quran (Tafseer)

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Jalaalain	Jalal-ud-Din Al-Mahalli	814 A.H
	Jalal-ud-Din Al-Sayuti	911 A.H
Madaarik-ul-Tanzeel	Hafiz-ud-Din-ul- Nasafi	710A.H
Anwaar-ul-Tanazeel	Umer-ul- Bayzaavi	665 A.H

Every tafseer, as any book of interpretation of any classical text, is written taking in due consideration of the circumstances and conditions that prevailed at that time. Six hundred years have passed since Jalaalain was written and four hundreds years have passed since it was updated. Why cannot we teach some modern Tafasir in addition to these basic books.

Principles of Hadith Criticism

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Nukhbat-ul-Fikar	Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalaani	852 A.H
	Al-Hadith	
Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Muatta	Imam- Malik	197 A.H
Al-Jamia-ul Saheh Bukhari	Imam-Ismaeel Bukhari	256 A.H
Al-Jamia-ul saheh Muslim	Imam-Muslim-ul-qasheri	261A.H
Sunnan-ibn Majah	Muhammad-ul-Qaromini	273 A.H
Sunnan Abu-Dauood	Suleman-ul-Sajistaani	273 A.H

Al- Jamia Saheh Tirmizi	Muhammad Issa Tirmazi	279 A.H
Al- Sunan-ul- Sughra	Shoaib-ul- Sanaae	303 A.H
Sharah Maani-ul- Asaar	Muhammad -ul -Tahaavi	321 A.H
Mishkaath-ul- Masabih	Khatib Tabraizi	737 A.H

New compilations in Hadith should also be prescribed. The objections raised in respect of Hadith should also be taught in the light of modern literature on Hadith especially written by the orientalist and modern Muslim scholars.

Theology

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Aqaaed-i- Nasafi	Najamud-Din Nasafi	837 A.H
Sharah-e- Aqaaed	Taftazaani	792 A.H
Al- Muwaaqif	Qazi Aazad-ud-Din Alaeje	786A.H
Sharah-ul- Mawaaqif	Ali Jarjaani	816 A.H
Al Haashiyah Al- Zahidiyah	Mirza Muhammad Al- Harvi	1101 A.H

The modern Scholasticism and Theology (Ilm-ul-Kalam) developed during the last two centuries, has rendered the old Ilm-ul-Kalam meaningless. We are still ignorant about new Ilm-ul-Kalam, which is deeply influenced by the advancements in physical and social sciences. The last book, which is prescribed, was written three hundred years ago.

Jurisprudence

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al -Husaami	Hasaam-ud-Din	644 A.H
Al- Manaar-ul-Anwaar	Abul-Barkaat-ul-Nasafi	710 A.H
Sharah-Noorul-Anwaar	Mula Jewon	1130A.H
Al-Tanqeh and Sharah-ul-Touzeh	Ubaid-ud-Din Masaud	745 A.H
Uusool-e-Shaashi	Nizam-ud-Din Al-Shashe	328 A.H
Musala-mu- Saboot	Mahibullah Al-Behari	1190 A.H

Law

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Mukhtasar-ul-Qadoori	Muhammad Au-Qadori	428 A.H
Al-Bidaya and Sharah-ul-Hidaya	Ali-Al-Marghinani	593 A.H
Kanzul-Daqaaeq	Abul Barkaat Nasafi	710A.H
Al-Wiqayah	Mehmood-ul- Mahboobi	673 A.H
Maneet-ul- Musali	Sareed-ud-Din Al-Kashghari	7 th A.H
Tanvir-ul-Absaar	Shamus-ud-Din Anfari	1004 A.H
Sharah-ul-Durrul-Mukhtaar	Alao-ud-Din Haskafi	1088 A.H
Noor- ul- EEzah and Sharah	Hasan Al-Wafaie	1069 A.H
Al-Siraaji	Siraj-ud-Din	7 th A.H

The law and its principles are for living human beings. They change with the changing times and changing needs of the society. The Law and Jurisprudence has taken great leaps forward after the Industrial Revolution and Communication Revolution leading to unprecedented commercial activities. The whole new fields of law have emerged but we are teaching that rudimentary Law and Jurisprudence of Mediaeval Ages. As discussed earlier that the Muslim were the pioneers in development of law and Jurisprudence but then ignored it as they did with other disciplines. Even the most recent book that we are teaching is three hundred fifty years old. Thus how would we address the present day issues? The changes have taken place not only in social thinking but new sciences and areas of activity have come into being but we continue to stay where we were. We are chained to past and do not want to move, anyway, into the present and the future.

Dialectics

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Sharifiyah and Sharah	Mustafa Jaonpurri	1083 A.H

Arabic Prose

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Muqaamaat-ul-Badei	Bdei-u-Zaman alhamdani	398 A.H
Muqaamaat-ul-Hareri	Ali Al- Hareri	516 A.H
Nafha-tul-yaman	Ahmad-ul- Sherwani	3 rd A.H

Arabic Poetry

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Muallaqaat ul-Sabbaa	Jamaar-al-Raviah	155 A.H
Al-Hamaasah	Abu- Tamaam Taaee	2313 A.H
Dewaan Al-Mutanabeh	Abu Tayyib Al-Mutanabbi	856 A.H

The Arabic prose kept on developing whereas we have been teaching literature of nine hundred years ago. We should teach a part of old classics and also incorporate modern Arabic prose in our curriculum. The language is a living thing; it changes and develops as society changes but we still live in the past. This poetry is no doubt, a classic poetry but the poetry of modern age, in diction and content, has changed altogether. The language and the topics have changed. It is like teaching Homer but depriving students of Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Shelley or teaching Hafiz and Khusru while ignoring Iqbal and Faiz.

Logic

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Shamsiyah	Najam-ud-Din Al-Qazveeni	493 A.H
Al-Qatbeiyah	Qutab-ud-Din Al-Reyazi	766 A.H
Al-Tehzeeb	Al-Taftazaani	892 A.H
Sharah Mulla Hassan	Mullah Hassan Ghulam Mustafa	1199 A.H
Hidaya-tul Hikmah and Al-Hikmat-ul-Baleghah	Aseer-ud-Din	660 A.H
Sharah Shams Al-Bazighah	Muhammad Al- Farooqi	812 A.H

These books are basically the commentaries on the logic of Aristotle whereas the West has gone far ahead of Aristotle. After the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution, form and topics of logic have completely changed but we are still under the influence of Aristotle and give little attention to modern Philosophy and Logic.

Astronomy

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Al-Mulakhas-fil-Hayaha	Mehmood-ul- Khawarzmi	7 th A.H
Sharah Qazi	Musa Mehmood Ar-Roohi	840 A.H
Tahsreh-ul – Aflaak	Bahauddin aamoli	1030 A.H
Al- Sharah Al-Tasreh	Latafullah Al-Mahendi	1145 A.H

Galileo, Kepler, Copernicus and Newton changed the very basic concepts of Astronomy. All our books were written long before them in the light of Ptolemy's ideas. Now it is the age of Observatories and Hubble telescope. All these books have become totally outdated and lost their all-practical utility.

Arithmetic

Name of the Book	Name of the Author	Date of Death
Khulasah-fil- Hesaab	Bahauddin Aamoli	1030 A.H
Tahreer Uqledus	Nasiruddin Toosie	672 A.H

Now you can well imagine that the Arithmetic that we teach in madaris today is Arithmetic of four hundred years ago, which is no more taught, today in any educational

institution. Euclid was written before Christ and Tusi's commentary on it had been written eight hundred years ago. It is no crime to love one's past but to keep living in it is not a sign of love but a crime.

(c) New Method of Teaching

Method of teaching has its significance. The teaching methodology of Madaris is quite outmoded. In our madaris the stress is laid on rote learning rather than using mind and intellect. As a consequence, there is a little tilt and aptitude to the use of mind and creative work. To ask questions about the subject taught is very much appreciated and encouraged in modern schools whereas in madaris there is discouragement of inquiring and questioning mind and asking questions amounts to discourtesy and insolence. It stifles innovation and creativity.

By wrongly interpreting and applying a lot of traditions in this context, we have begun to regard raising questions as something very bad and disrespectful whereas the whole Quran is a witness to the fact that we have been trained to ask questions about the manifestations of the universe. It is not a sign of disrespect and rudeness to ask questions. On the contrary, high-class scholarship, innovation and inventions are impossible without the challenging and the questioning disposition.

(d) Teaching of Modern Languages

No other language besides Arabic and Persian is prescribed in the curriculum of madaris. Arabic, no doubt, is very seriously taught in the madaris but its way and method of teaching is such that a graduate of the madaris cannot speak even a few sentences of Arabic whereas a 3rd grade student of

English Public School can speak English fluently. The whole emphasis is laid upon memorizing rules of Arabic grammar.

No modern language is taught in madaris. Even now Persian is no more there except basic one. Teaching of English, German, French etc. is regarded as 'Kufr' (infidelity). My teachers of childhood considered acquisition of English language as 'Kufr'.

(e) Adopting Contemporary Diction

All our books are written in difficult diction. Consequently our young generation is cut off from ancient literature. We can study today Plato, Aristotle and Shakespeare because the West has rendered them into modern prose. We adopt difficult and unusual style of writing and regard it the climax of literary achievement. I just give you an example in this context. A renowned religious scholar of 1930s has translated the Quranic verse of Surah Al-Rehman:

كُلُّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

As 'Sadur afa'al lazum bi-zat hay' (Urdu)

"Manifestation of the actions is very essence of His existence."

We may understand the Quranic verse itself but this translation is more difficult to grasp. It is very essential to simplify and render into easy language the best books on Islam written in local languages. The books in Arabic and Persian shall also be translated into local languages so that an ordinary reader may benefit from them.

(f) Promoting Research

There is no concept and culture of research in the Muslim world. To edit an old manuscript or to write a commentary on some classic has been our research for centuries. There are no original works on any academic topic in the light of modern sciences.

Once I developed "a taste for Islamic Economics. I collected a lot of books on the topic but honestly speaking, there were not many books, which could be suggested or prescribed as a textbook to be taught at postgraduate level in any University.

The same is the case with law. Only a few good books on law have been written on Islamic law during the last hundred years whereas in the West a lot of new books on every branch of law are published every year.

We are self-complacent when we say that such and such book is very old while in the West they take pride in declaring that a certain book is published this year or this is its latest edition especially this is the case in law and Sciences.

Every now and then, the Western scholars make comments on the Quran, Hadith, our law and society with fresh references. In the first instance, their latest opinions on our literature do not reach us and especially to our traditional religious class or scholars. If at all it reaches, it reaches after a quarter of a century and that too if somebody has translated the work. Even then we do not respond to it at academic and intellectual level but just declare it repugnant to Islam. Sometimes we curse them and get satisfied by saying that its effect and influence would soon dissipate and peter out.

We do not have the slightest idea of the enormity of damage this poisonous literature is causing to our younger generation. I daily face serious questions from young, educated people about various aspects or interpretations of Islam. Quite a number of them have deep love for religion but they are fed up with the religious class or irrational interpretation of Islam. And I feel they are justified. We don't understand their mind. We have little knowledge about their education and don't know their language. What is more than this is that we have no sympathy with them? If we had the least concern for them, we would have tried to keep them on the path of religion or persuaded them to enter the fold of Islam completely. We dub them as deviants and derelicts by judging from their faces and dress whereas there are quite a good number of them who have great regard for religion and few of them sometimes offer prayers. It was obligatory for us to prepare ourselves to outreach and educate this generation. We have completely failed to perform this task.

A young girl once appeared before me for an interview and she was scantily clad. By her appearances, I considered her a spoiled girl who has no concern with religion. I asked her what she was studying those days. She answered that she was reading Jalaluddin Rumi. I was taken aback to hear this answer and on my further questioning, she told me that she was in the United States when she bought a translation of Rumi's work in English. She further told me that because Rumi loved God, so she is studying him, as she wants to love God. She went away but I was terribly jolted from inside that I had committed a sin by taking her as irreligious and immodest girl, simply by judging her from outward appearance. She was in search of God's love. She belonged to Allah.

Once a very intelligent girl worked with me. She was a Muslim but she was raised and educated in western countries. She was very much influenced by western culture in her general behaviour but she often asked me questions about Islam. It seemed that she was in search of the true spirit of Islam. She was interested to know about the personal life of Muhammad Rasullulah (peace be upon him). I gave her Martin Lings' biography of the Prophet to read. After having read the Sirah, followed by prolonged detailed discussions on the topic, she renewed her faith in Allah and the Prophet.

This new generation has seeds of faith (Iman) in them but their environment and education have kept them away from Islam. Present day Islamic literature does not have any appeal for them. Their issues, their questions and their way of thinking are different. They are completely fed up with the traditionalist and conservative attitude of Muslim scholars. My question is: who will guide and look after these bewildered and confused young people?

I completely agree with the opinion of Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi¹ that the real issue of Muslims today is their intellectual decline. For example, no intellectual giant was born between Ibn-e-Taiymiyah (1328 AD) and Shah Waliullah (1762 AD) who could contribute to the Islamic thought at intellectual and academic level. This was the age when a large number of scientists, scholars, philosophers and economists of the highest caliber were born in the West. After the death of Shah Waliullah you will find not a single thinker of his caliber. The names like Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan, Iqbal and Mawdudi do emerge in the 19th and the 20th century. We

¹ An Indian scholar and prolific writer who has recently died

have branded Sir Sayyed as heretic; Iqbal, we have started accepting but our clergy of India and Pakistan does recognize him as a religious scholar because he was not a graduate of any madrassah.

I was reading Allama Muhammad Asad's ¹ letter in which he expressed, with a heavy heart, that in 1950s a specific group in Pakistan had launched a campaign of "takfeer" (excommunication) against him. As a consequence, he was disheartened and left for Morocco. His exegesis of the Quran, in my opinion, is the best of all the brief commentaries on the Quran written in English so far. His commentary on Sahih Bukhari and other books rank very high in Islamic literature. Some people hold that he was the infidel for he did not subscribe to traditional issues.

It is no secret that when Sir William Muir wrote biography of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in which he tarnished the image of Muhammad (peace be upon him), Sir Sayyed sold all his property and went to England to search material to write a book on Sirah in response to Muir's biography of the Prophet. It took Sir Sayyed many years to write a book on Sirah, entitled, Khutbaat e Ahmadiyah. He produced an excellent work on the topic but we labeled him as renegade and 'Nature worshipper'. We have rejected and ignored all his services he had rendered in the cause of Islam and the Muslims just for his few ideas that are not compatible with the mainstream religious scholars.

History has proved that in spite of Imam Bukhari's opinion about the creation of the Quran, Sahih Bukhari is considered by the Ummah as the most authentic of all the

¹ Leopold Weiss who embraced Islam and wrote extensively on it

collections of Ahadith. We don't give any weightage to Sir Sayyed's movement of Aligarh that played a vital role for the survival of the Muslims in India, as did his *Khutbat-i-Ahmedia*, which is a great scholarly work on the Sirah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). We are gradually losing tolerance. What is the problem with us? We have now zero tolerance even for a little difference of opinion. We are not prepared to accommodate the opponents' viewpoints. This is absolutely non-academic and irrational behaviour and attitude, which generated in us hostility to knowledge.

The Muslims today are suffering from intellectual starvation. They have lost the capability of analyzing the ideas and events. Instead of analyzing the facts, we always blame and accuse others for our own mistakes and follies. We raise great hue and cry and hold others responsible for our own failures, whereas our real issue is our intellectual decline and starvation. We do not work. We do not labour.

(g) Specialization

Take the case of specialization. A student of *madaris* earns the degree of *Dars-i-Nizami* after having spent eight to ten years in a *madrasah*. He spends one or two years more to become a 'mufti' (who has the authority to issue verdicts) of Islamic Law. Then he starts giving 'Fatwa' (verdict) on family matters, religious matters, personal law, economic and banking issues, trade and business; in brief, on almost all matters that pertain to life. The graduate of a *madrasah* is considered to have mastered the Quran, Hadith, Logic, Islamic Law, Arabic Literature, Astronomy etc. So he has the authority and the expertise to issue a final verdict on any matter of life, which would be binding on whole Muslim Ummah.

The modern way of learning is dramatically opposed to it. We just take the example of Law. A student graduates after fourteen years of study and spends three more years to obtain bachelor's degree in law i.e. L.L.B. and after that he does his PhD in Law in three to five years. His doctoral dissertation is on a specific topic of an area of Law i.e. only on one aspect of Law of Contract. Then he joins some University as a Lecturer. He is promoted to the position of a Professor after he has put in 30 years of postgraduate teaching and research. If you ask him some questions about some other aspect of Law of Contract, he would simply say, 'I don't know. You ask the relevant person about this'. He would not feel ashamed for not answering this question. On the other hand, a student who is in a madrasah for ten years, gives verdict on all the issues of life without any hesitation and gives his final decision with full confidence. This way of thinking and attitude does not work today. We have to conform our attitude to the attitude of the present time.

Our thinking is strange. If somebody asks us a question about new legal research, we quickly respond that all questions have been answered and all issues have been addressed by our earlier jurists (Imams and Fuqaha). There is no doubt that Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafai, Imam Ibn Hanbal, Imam Jaa'fer Sadiq were jurists par excellence who have formulated principles of Islamic Jurisprudence and have expounded Islamic law in great details yet their principles need to be applied in the present situations.

Many new issues have arisen today which are to be addressed in the light of these principles. Just for example, there are billions of dollars of business of shipping and aviation industry annually and there is a huge business of insurance. The Information Technology has completely

changed the world. Those learned jurists did not discuss these issues, as these were not present there in those times. I have not so far come across any book on the topics with reference to Islam.

We should not boast and gloat over achievements of our ancestors in the past. The world has made tremendous progress and development in every field of life and we lagged far behind the nations of the world. It is not the Stone Age; it is the age of Internet. This is not the age of horses and swords; it is the age of missiles and atom bombs. This is not the age of emotions and sentiments but the age of reason and logical arguments. But we are not prepared to come out of this intellectual logjam and change our thinking and attitude.

(h) Provision of Books

We do not even inherit the books of our forefathers. Even the works of Ibn-e-Sina, Az-Zahrawi, Umer Khayyam, Farabi, Ibn Nafees and Abu Haitham are not found in our private or public libraries anywhere in the Muslim world. Their translations rather their original manuscripts are available in the libraries of the West. Rather the classics on the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) were discovered and published by the students and the scholars of Leiden University of Netherlands. If today we want to carry out research on ancient Muslim philosophy or literature, we would not go to Deoband or Braili¹ for this purpose as we would not find there anything on the topics. We would have to proceed to Laiden and Oxford where I could get the required material for my research. I have visited the libraries of Jamia Ashrafia and Jamia Naeemia², but to my

¹ The largest religious madaris of Indo-Pak subcontinent

² The largest madaris of Lahore, Pakistan

surprise, the books that I have seen in the personal libraries of the professors in Europe outnumber the books in institutions like Jamia Ashrafia and Naeemia.

In Pakistan, there is no good library on Islamic Law. Once, in Lincoln's Inn London, I tried to look for books on 'Equity', the library computer showed about 240 titles on the subject with all the information about the authors, publishers, pages of the book etc. in ten seconds. You will not find books in such a large number on such a subject in any library of any of the most prestigious madaris. Neither there is any system to help the students to find out the books.

Now the research has become easier. A CD of the computer worth one US dollar is available in the market, which carries the recitation of the whole Quran by four different qaaries (who recite the Quran) along with the four complete books of exegesis, six canonical works of Hadith, a number of books on Fiqah and Sirah. Search is also very easy. If you just put the word 'wudu' in the CD search, it will show you all the verses of the Quran and the Ahadith that carry the word 'wudu' and will give you the opinions of all Fuqaha in ten seconds. Then you can form your own opinion by studying all this information on the subject. If I were to do this job in the library of a madrassah, it would take one month (2.6 millions seconds) to accomplish the job. That is the difference between the west and us.

Take another example. There are more than four thousands titles and documents on only Human Rights on the website of the University of Minnesota U.S.A and these are easily accessible to us free of cost. Just look! A university of the West has provided us, on the web, such a great number of

books and documents on only one aspect of law and politics, i.e. human rights. And all this material is available free of cost.

Whenever I have discussed this matter with Ulama, the only answer that I get from them is that they have no resources. I do not accept this argument because if we build a single minaret in the mosque instead of four that we usually have, we could save the amount and utilize it in building up a average library. As you know, there were no minarets in Masjid-i-Nabawi and Baitullah in the beginning. These were added to them latter on simply for identification. Is it not enough to have a small beautiful minaret in the mosque for identification and spend the balance money to establish a library there?

Hajj is an obligation on every rich Muslim but only once. I personally know some people who perform pilgrimage every year besides obligatory Hajj. We spend billions of rupees on Hajj or Umrah every year. Is it not possible for us to spend this entire amount on building up libraries in our country? Acquisition of knowledge is a greater act of worship. We can quote hadith in this context that one night of a scholar is better than a hundred nights of a pious person (aabid). Leave it aside; you just calculate the money that we spend on unnecessary religious rituals, public meetings and rallies in one year; it would be in billions by means of which you could set up a grand prestigious library every year.

Our forefathers had conducted research work in very difficult conditions. Is it not an historical fact that Imam Sarakhsi wrote 'Al-Mabsut' in thirty volumes in a dungeon where he was imprisoned by a Muslim dictator? He had no facility of life, even no access to any prestigious library. He had nothing except passion for learning and commitment to the cause. Iqbal says:

نقش ہیں سب ناتمام خونِ جگر کے بغیر
نغمہ ہے سودائے خام خونِ جگر کے بغیر

“Great art is not born in the mind of self-complacent artist; it is the fruit of the tears, the anguish and the travail, which fall to the lot of every true artist who is in tune with the spirit of humanity.”¹

(v) Science Education

We should take stock of the position that we hold today in the field of science and technology. Where do we stand? Our educational institutions, our libraries and our laboratories have no comparison with those of the West. The total population of the Muslims is 1.9 billion whereas the Jews are only 13 million. The scholars of the Muslim countries got only 12 Nobel prizes whereas the Jewish Scientists captured 178 Nobel prizes.

If we want to study science and technology, we try for scholarships of the western universities. If we intend to carry out research, we have to benefit from the laboratories of the West. In order to get latest information and material on a specific scientific topic, we have to turn to their research journals.

We should first change our thinking and attitude towards science and its teaching and take science as our legacy, as discussed earlier. We had developed and promoted the Science and introduced it to the world. Now we treat it as a western discipline. Our religious minded people leave modern schools and universities and prefer to join a medrassah

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad

whereas it is repugnant to explicit teachings of Islam. We should consider acquisition of scientific knowledge as important as education of Islamic Law (Fiqh).

We should incorporate science subjects in the curricula of medrassas. We need to set up excellent educational institutions and research institutes for higher education in Science. We should create an enabling atmosphere wherein there shall be higher teaching in Science, up to date research on Science; and where topics like, how to harness universe, how to reach the moon and mercury, how to split up atom and how to integrate the spirit and the matter are discussed and debated freely and frequently. And where we could make new discoveries for the welfare and benefit of humankind, discover treatment for incurable and fatal diseases, where we could think about improving the general health and food for the human race. It is our obligation. It is humanity's debt on us. This is human welfare and this is Islam.

I would request and appeal to our respected Ulama to develop and promote a taste and culture in the Muslim community for Science and Technology. If we do not learn lessons from what has happened in Afghanistan and Iraq, we would be wiped out. They should persuade the Ummah to spend money on promoting Science and Technology instead of dissipating it on unnecessary rituals, public meetings and rallies. We spend billions of rupees every year on religious meetings and processions, which have no relevance to the true spirit of Islam. Is it not possible for Ulama to issue a 'Fatwa' to the effect that instead of spending money on unnecessary rituals and ceremonies, people should pay fee of a poor student of Science. Similarly, instead of spending on second Haj and Umrah, they should finance a nearby student of Engineering University for one complete year. I sincerely believe that by doing so, they could please God more, their

Hajj and Umrah would be happily accepted and at the same time genuine students would acquire knowledge of Science.

(vi) Higher Morality

The Muslims, in general, are morally on the decline. This moral degeneration becomes more conspicuous when we claim that we are the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about whom Allah has said in the Quran:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

"Indeed you are of the highest manners."¹

A poet has rightly said:

بلغ	اعلى	بكمالہ	کشف	الدرجی	بجمالہ
صنت	جمع	خصالہ	صلو	علیہ	و آلہ

When I was studying in Great Britain, the Professors of Law would teach us precedents of the higher courts. It was a strange coincidence that most of the precedents involving offences of moral turpitude were of the cases of our own people (the immigrants). I often pondered over it and felt ashamed in my heart of hearts. Majority of the precedents of fraud, deception, breach of trust etc. had arisen from our own community whereas good character and high manners have the highest value in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has said that the best amongst the Muslims is he who has the best character.

¹ Al-Quran 68:4

(a) Humility

Islam teaches us to observe humility in our behaviour and conduct. The Quran says that the believers in Allah walk on His Earth with humility. When a believer comes to know that God is the real source of life and power; this life is transient and men/women have to render their accounts in the Hereafter, he naturally becomes, humble, polite and kind. He is told that if he asks for mercy from Allah, he should be merciful towards His creatures. If He is not kind and tender-hearted to His creatures, he would be deprived of His mercy. If he helps the people, Allah would help him. If he mitigates the pains and miseries of the people, Allah would alleviate his pain and distress on the Day of Judgment. These teachings inculcate in him mercy and kindness and root out narrow-mindedness.

(b) Higher Morals

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has said that if people treat you gently, you also treat them well and if they treat you badly, still you respond in a good way.¹ Imam Bahaiqi has related the tradition in his collection of Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said, 'shall I not tell you what the best character in this world and the Hereafter is? He who severs ties of relationship with you, you forge link with him. Who deprives you of something, you give him and who wrongs you, you forgive him'.

These traditions explicitly explain that our conduct and behaviour is not bilateral but unilateral. We are not supposed to do good to a person simply because he is doing well to us. We have to respond positively and do good even to a person

¹ Mishkaat: chapter, Zulm

who has done us harm. We would not repay evil with evil but would forebear and forgive. We have to do all this to seek the pleasure of Allah, to obey the Prophet and for our own welfare. If we do this with the intention of seeking Allah's pleasure, then even the evils of other people would force us do good to them. This is the accomplishment and climax of good character for which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent to humankind.¹

(c) Forgiveness

We have been commanded to forgive when we have the power to avenge. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that once the Prophet Moses (A.S) asked Allah who among his creatures is the most respected in his sight. Allah replied that he who forgives despite his power to avenge.

Islam has taught us to forebear and forgives people. Abu Jahl was the worst enemy of Islam. His son, Ikrimah followed in the footsteps of his father. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) forgave him on the eve of the conquest of Makkah. He ran away to Yemen. His wife Umm Hakim, daughter of Al Harith Ibn Hisham, had already converted to Islam. She sought pardon for her husband from Muhammad (peace be upon him) who granted it. She went to Yemen and returned with her husband. When the Prophet saw Ikrimah coming to him, he instructed his companions that Ikrimah Ibn Abu Jahl was coming. His father was a deadly enemy of Islam. They should not rebuke his father in front of him. To speak ill of dead pains the living. Subhan Allah! What a respect and veneration for humankind! It is said to his severely wronged companions that the son of their worst

¹ Muwatta Imam Malik, Kitab al-Jamia

enemy was coming and they must not torture him by speaking ill of his father. This was the broadmindedness and magnanimity of character that made people enter the fold of Islam in the East and the West. And Ikrimah devoted the rest of his life to the cause of Islam.

Habbar Ibn Aswad hurt Zainab, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), when she was attempting to emigrate from Makkah. She was pregnant. She suffered from miscarriage from which she never recovered. Habbar came to the Prophet and sought pardon. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) granted him unconditional pardon.

Hazrat Hamza was Prophet's loving and devoted uncle. Wahshi Ibn Harb killed Hamza ruthlessly during the battle of Uhud. Hinda, wife of Abu Sufyan, chewed the liver of Hamza after his martyrdom. Wahshi came to the Prophet Muhammad in Madina and asked for forgiveness. The Prophet pardoned him. Hinda sought pardon from Muhammad (peace be upon him) on the eve of the conquest of Makkah and he granted it.

During Prophet's lifetime, a false accusation was leveled against his wife Ayesha. Mistah Ibn Athathah, one of the relations of Abu Bakr Siddique (RA) also spread this false accusation against Ayesha. It was a great misdemeanor. Mistah was not well off. He was financially helped by Abu Bakr, which the latter stopped after this incidence. It was, in the first instance, not the legal responsibility of Abu Bakr to extend help to him. He did it on his own accord on moral grounds. After this incidence he was morally justified to stop this financial help. When Abu Bakr stopped giving him financial help, the following verse was revealed:

وَلَا يَأْتِلِ أُولُوا الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا
 أُولَى الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي
 سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
 يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Let not those who are men of plenty and means among you swear that they will not give to their relatives and the poor and those who leave their homes in the service of God. They should forgive and overlook (their feelings). Would you not like God to forgive you? And God is forgiving and kind.”¹

Such are the noble teachings of Islam! What a higher moral standard that we are advised to do good even to the enemies and those who have hurt us.

(d) Control over Anger

Anger is the deadliest enemy of morals. Man under the influence of anger forgets ethical values. Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Muslim Emperor of India, has beautifully expressed this idea in the following couplet:

ظفر آدمی اس کو نہ جانے گا ہو وہ کیا ہی صاحب فہم و ذکا
 جسے عیش میں یاد خدا نہ رہی جسے طیش میں خوف خدا نہ رہا

¹ Al-Quran 24:22

"Zafar don't consider him a man, no matter how wise and intelligent he may be, who forgot God in his days of luxury and lost fear of God when roused to anger."

Only fear of God can suppress anger. One of the characteristics of the believers, as described in the Quran, is that when they are roused to anger, they show patience and forgive.¹ There is a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah (RA) that the Messenger of Allah said that strong person is not that he who subdues his contestant; rather he who can control his anger.² A villager came to the Prophet and asked for a piece of advice. Rasulullah (peace be upon hem) advised him to control anger.

A person asked his servant to bring a cup of hot tea. When the servant came closer to him, the tea was accidentally spilled on his foot. He looked in anguish and anger towards the servant who became extremely nervous but resorted to the Quran to save his skin and said:

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ

'They control their anger'

The master kept quiet; rather signs of anguish and anger disappeared from his face. The servant further recited:

وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ

'And they forgive the people.'

¹ The Quran: 42: 43

² Sahih Muslim

The master said, 'I forgive you'. Listening this the servant completed the verse:

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

" And Allah loves those who give more than due."¹

The master said, ' I free you from the bond'. This is Islamic higher morality that you free a slave if he burns your feet.

Our behaviour and manners deserve consideration and need a lot of rectification. We often lose temper and behave in a rough, impolite manner. The greater the religious scholar/sufi, the more he is, sometimes, harsh (jalali) and arrogant. Likewise the higher in rank the officer is, the more he is rude and arrogant. When I was studying the tafseer (exegesis) of the Quran, I used to visit a religious scholar in madressah to help me to understand some point in tafseer. If I asked some sensitive questions, he would lose his temper. The same is the case of higher officers. The higher in rank, the more he is harsh and rude. Once an officer told me, and felt pride on being rude to a person who called upon him in his office, that he did not offer him even a chair to sit in and kept him standing in front of him. I retorted instantly that he had misbehaved and there was no justification for him to do so because he was appointed by the government to serve him and he was also your paymaster as your salary is paid out from the taxes that he pays to public exchequer.

¹ The Quran: 3-134

Good morality is our best weapon. Our religion spread through higher ethical values. Now we are deprived of high morals and manners. Our flowers lost their fragrance.

Man's greatness is not measured by his education, wealth, or rank but by his high manners, humility, austerity and sincerity. We have to launch a movement to correct and rectify our morals and manners. Once I was listening to Maulana Mawdudi's interview, on radio Pakistan, which he gave to radio a couple of months before his death. He was asked a question that he had devoted all his life to the cause of Islam and its revival what, in the light of his life long experience, the Muslims need to do most? He spontaneously retorted that the Muslims need moral rearmament. This was the sum and substance of Maududi's life long experience in the cause of Islam. No doubt what he had said is 100% correct. Without manners we are sterile. We need a deeper reflection.

(vii) Human Rights

The movements of human rights started gathering momentum soon after the Second World War. The United Nations drew up its Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) in 1948 and in 1966 it adopted International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which came into force in 1976. The Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was enforced in 1981 and Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force in 1990. Besides this, world community has unanimously agreed on hundreds of Declarations, Covenants, and Treaties etc, dealing with various aspects of human rights. We the Muslims treat this movement as machinations and conspiracy of the West. As a consequence we have developed

a very negative approach to the whole issue and that is very harmful.

The religions teach us respect for human beings. Islam since its inception has focussed its teachings on humankind. The story of our ancestors, Adam and Eve, clearly indicates that humans are noble and dignified. He is the being to whom the angel bowed and prostrated. The objective of the Old Testament and New Testament (Zabur, Torah, Injil) and the Quran is the welfare and development of humankind. Their sole aim is to establish justice and the rule of law. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) accomplished human honour and dignity. The Charter of Madina¹ (Misaaq-i-Madina) and Prophet's Farewell Address at his last pilgrimage reflect all this. Farewell Sermon (Khutabah Hajjatul Wida) was the first formal Charter of Human Rights.

I quote three examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). When a delegation of the Christians of Najran² came to call on the Prophet in Madinah, just before the conquest of Makkah, he (peace be upon him) pitched their tents in the precincts of Masjid-i-Nabawi. Although their tents could be put up outside the courtyard of the mosque for they were Christians yet he made them stay in the precincts of Masjid-i-Nabawi. Their horses too were allowed to stay in the yard of the mosque and they were also fed there. And now we don't allow any person to enter our mosque if he belongs to another sect. If he has entered our mosque, we wash and cleanse it because he has defiled it. Still

¹ Charter was agreed between the Muslims, Jews and Christians when the Prophet migrated to Medina

² A province of Yemen

we claim to be the followers and devotees of the Prophet. Do we allow any Christian or Jew to enter our mosque? My question is: was the Prophet weak at that time to be so accommodating? No, not at all. The Muslims at that time had conquered half of Arabian Peninsula. The people of Najran were weaker than the believers. Whatever treatment was meted out to them, it was purely out of manners and courtesy. This was a matter more of morals and not of expediency. He displayed respect for human beings. Do we treat minorities like this in our countries?

We have our own Muslim states wherein the Christians, the Jews, the Hindus etc but our treatment of them is abhorrent. Rather we have very strange behaviour. We label Muslims as non-Muslims just either to pressurize them or due to conjectures and hearsay evidence. It makes their life miserable. I cite two instances in this context. In 1990, I was appointed Assistant Commissioner¹ in Umar Kot ². A religious sect decided to hold a public meeting. After negotiations and laying down certain pre-conditions, we allowed them to hold the meeting. But what happened? They held the public meeting but violated the laws and the restrictions agreed upon between the parties. I took action against them according to law. A few religious leaders of that sect were arrested. I personally went to prison and made nice arrangement for their meals and provided them with prayer mats, utilities etc. Those who were found innocent were released immediately. After a few days, some posters were stuck on the walls against me in

¹ A civil servant who is the Chief Executive of the local area

² A subdivision in Sindh province of Pakistan

the whole province of Sindh labeling me as Qadiani¹. Fortunately the Khateeb of the local biggest mosque had been my student at International Islamic University, Islamabad. He and other senior ulama of Umarkot refuted the charge labeled against me in their sermons because they knew me personally. The second example is of a high ranking public servant who is a very pious and knowledgeable person. He says his prayers five times regularly that too in congregation. All his sons and daughters are equipped with advance religious education and are practicing Muslim besides being highly qualified professionals. Once a politician after being fed up with his honesty and integrity wrote down about him that he belonged to the Qadiani sect. After that, quite a few religious parties, based on this mere allegation and without any cogent evidence and contrary to the facts, followed the suit and started calling him Qadiani. You can well imagine what torture he would have undergone and what would have been his plight in the community. Is this the Islamic teaching that we make life for someone unbearable and torturous without any investigation or evidence? A few years ago I met some of the elders of this religious party in Makkah. I complained to them about this with a painful heart. You just listen to their response. They told me that I should ask the man to refute the charge. I said: 'I seek refuge of Allah from Satan, the condemned'. They were embarrassed and taken aback. I told them that it has hurt me to hear this answer from them. I further told them that it was their moral obligation to investigate before labeling him with this very serious charge. They should not have believed in the simple rumours or hearsay. By all accounts, the burden of providing evidence and proof lies on their shoulders and

¹ A sect which emerged in northern India town of (Qaadiaan) in late twentieth century and the Muslim consider it heretic and dubbing somebody as a Qaadianni means a lot of troubles for a person

despite the fact that they were so called religious scholars, they insisted that the accused/labeled person should produce evidence to refute the charge. I tried my level best to persuade them that every human being is entitled to respect and dignity and we should not spoil the lives of the other people by labeling them. But it all fell flat on them. I recited to him this couplet from Faiz Ahmad Faiz¹:

آتشِ فشاں ز قہر و ملامت زباں شیخ
از اشک تر ز دردِ غریباں ردائے تو

“Oh ! Prophet! Your mantle is wet with tears you have shed in the love of the poor people but the religious leader is spitting fire of wrath and rebuke against them.”

Let me quote second instance from the biography of the Prophet. Once he was sitting in Masjid-i-Nabawi with his companions, a villager came to him and he started urinating in the mosque. His companions ran towards him to stop him. He refrained them to do so and let him urinate. “May be he is in trouble”, said the Prophet. We claim to be his devout followers and servants but we do not allow people of other sects to offer prayers in the mosque whereas the prophet is allowing urination. What was he, what are we?

I narrate third example. Once the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was going somewhere along with his companions. On their way, they came across a bitch feeding her young one. The Prophet advised his companions to follow

¹ A great romantic and socialist Urdu poet of Pakistan who has recently died.

a different route so that bitch could feed her puppies undisturbed. Subhan Allah!¹ This was Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) whom we believe as a true Messenger of Allah. This was the moral character that vanquished East and West. We are the people who claim to be devotees of the Messenger of Allah but do we have any compatibility and congruence with his character?

بمصطفیٰؐ برساں خویش را کہ دیں ہمہ اوست
اگر بہ او نرسیدی ، تمام بلہی است

"Try to reach out Muhammad (peace be upon him) for he is the real 'Deen' and if you do not reach him, it would be the religion of Abu Lahab, not Islam." ²

Women folk are the half of the humankind. Fifty percent (50%) of the world population is the women but unfortunately our attitude towards women is not Islamic. It is very conservative and medieval. As a matter of principle, this attitude towards the softer gender is wrong and at the same time it also does not meet the demands of the time. It appears that we are very much influenced by the ideas of Christianity with regard to women. According to the Christian belief, the cause of first disobedience act committed by Adam was Eve. This gave rise to the concept that the woman is the root cause of all evils. Woman's 'moral degradation' found its expression in every human thought and attitude. The Christians have now recognized most of women's rights as a result of the

¹ Praise be for Allah; this is also said as expression of bewilderment.

² Iqbal

Human Rights' movement but we still follow the stories and legends of Israeliat (the traditions of the books of the Jews and the Christians) in our speeches and writings whereas the Quran is very clear about it. In Surah Baqarah, Allah (SWT) says: ¹

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ

"But Satan tempted them and had them expelled from the state they were in"

The Quran employs the dual form 'them' which shows that Eve is not responsible for Adam's first 'mistake'; both were wrong in disobeying God. Both asked for forgiveness and both were forgiven. It means that Eve did not seduce Adam (as it is in the Bible) but both of them were tempted by Satan simultaneously. This shows human frailty and equality but we have declared woman as 'born evil'. The irony is that even the contemporary movement for women rights has gone astray and touches extremes.

Since the status of women in modern society has deteriorated very badly, so even many Muslim men mistreat their women, and speak very lowely of them, falsely believing that this is the proper Muslim way of dealing with women. I find it necessary to clarify here the Prophet's manners in dealing with women. The Prophet said:²

"The best among you are the best to their wives."

Just imagine the treatment of her daughter, Fatima (RA) by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Prophet never entered her house without knock at the door

¹ Al-Quran 2:36

² Sahih Al-Jamia as-Sagheer Hadith no. 3260, 3261

and whenever she came to visit him, he would rise from his seat to welcome her. After the death of his wife, Khadijah (RA) he would send, all his life, gifts to her friends on Eid¹ days. On the day of conquest of Makkah, he did not put up his tent near Kabah² but pitched his tent near the grave of his wife, Khadijah (RA). What more love and respect you can expect of a husband for his wife?

On the other hand, we are the people (and the followers of the Prophet) who have a very low opinion of women and have developed a very insulting and humiliating attitude towards them. We say that a woman is 'Fitna'³ and a 'born evil'. We have relied upon those traditions in respect of women, which are almost rejected by the serious traditionists⁴. We have generalized injunctions about women though these were time or issue specific, which is contrary to the very spirit of law and the settled principles of interpretation.

For example, there are explicit injunctions in the Quran regarding polygamy:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا
طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعًا ۚ فَإِنْ

¹ Religious days of celebration and public festivity

² The most sacred place for the Muslim: the cubical structure in Makkah around which the Muslims revolve for prayer called tawwaaf

³ Something that tempts you, tests you and spoils you

⁴ Muhaddathin: those who are well versed in Ahadith (narrations) of the Prophet

خِفْتُمْ إِلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوْحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ
ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ إِلَّا تَعُولُوا

“If you fear you cannot be equitable to orphan girls (in your charge, or misuse their persons), then marry women who are lawful for you, two, three or four; but if you fear you cannot treat so many with equity, marry only one, or maid or a captive. This is better than being iniquitous.”¹

Imam Sai'd Ibn Jubayr, Qatadah and many more others from among successors of the companions² are of the opinion that these verses people are told that if they fear perpetrating wrongs on orphans they ought to be equally worried about perpetrating them on women. It proves that the real issue being discussed is of the rights of orphan girls. For the sake of the protection of their rights, it is prohibited to victimize them by marrying them.

The second condition is that if you can act equitable. This verse restricts the justification of polygamy by the condition of justice. He who does not fulfil the condition of acting equitably but at the same time benefits from the permission of marrying more than one wife in fact, breaches the trust with Allah. The courts of Islamic State are authorized to take cognizance of the complaints of wife or the wives who

¹ Al-Quran 4:3

² Taabaeen

are not treated justly.¹ The third aspect is that it is clearly stated that it is better to have one lest one should commit injustice when one has more than one wives.

We have taken the verse out of its context and also forgotten the condition of equity and have made marrying women as a means of luxury. It was not an injunction binding on Muslims to marry more than one wife. It was simply permission and that too conditional. It was not a general commandment but permission in specific conditions and circumstances.

Let us go back to life of the Prophet (we cannot discuss here in detail the topic of polygamous marriages of the Prophet as the Quran itself is clear on the point that it was special concession for the Prophet only). Imam Bukhaari has reported that:

Miswar Ibn Makhramah heard the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) saying when he was on the pulpit: "The family of Banu Hashim Ibn Al-Mughirah asked my permission if they may give their daughter to Ali Ibn Talib in marriage. I do not give them permission. I do not give them the permission. I do not give them the permission except that Ali Ibn Talib divorce my daughter and marry their's. Fatima is a part of my flesh. What perturbs her perturbs me and what tortures her tortures me².

The question is whether the Prophet was worried about his daughter only or he was considering human nature in general? My belief is that the Prophet cannot issue any

¹ Maududi, Tafheem-ul-Quraan, vol 1, page 321

² Chapter on Nikaah

injunction specific for his daughter. If it had been so, he would have not remarked (when Osama interceded for forgiveness of a woman from Bani Makhzum who had committed a theft) that even if his daughter Fatima had committed theft, he would have amputated her. This is clear from this behaviour of the Prophet that the second marriage is not a general permission. It is rather a human issue and matter of principle and not just to show off wealth and to satisfy one's unfettered lust.

Similarly, there is the issue of evidence of woman. The directive that evidence of two women is equal to that of a man was conditional and given in a specific context but it was made a general law. In the modern times, when woman have equal expertise in financial matters and there is no fear of their being forgetful, how would their evidence be made half. The Quran is very clear on this point that evidence like this takes place when some financial transaction is being effected and that too is for the future and further there is fear of women being forgetful. In that case two women would be a substitute for one man. It simply means that this directive is not for those matters, which are not of financial nature in the future. Secondly, if there were no fear of women being forgetful, this directive would not apply. In spite of this clear injunction, we treat woman in general as half. We do not make any distinction between a simple uneducated woman who has least interest in financial matters and an educated banker woman or a Chartered Accountant. This irrational attitude earns bad name for Islam.

Same is the case of Hudood Laws introduced in Pakistan in 1979 by General Zia-ul-Haq, the military dictator who toppled the elected government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in

1977. These laws were drafted hurriedly and were never debated in public not to speak of being discussed in the Parliament that had been dissolved. Furthermore, these were drafted in consultation with a small group of the religious scholars of a particular religious school of thought. Because of these poorly considered and badly drafted laws, sometimes a woman who is a rape victim undergoes a Hudood trial as an accused. A few years ago, the Federal Shariat Court¹ has clarified this point being illegal. Similarly there are many problems in these laws. Our religious scholars are not ready to review these unjust laws. We must make distinction between Hudood Allah² and the Hudood Ordinance³. We may examine Hudood Ordinance while keeping Hudood Allah intact.

We have debarred woman from our society. She has nothing to do with the world outside. It is great injustice that we have debarred her even from going to the mosque to offer congregational prayers. She is also not allowed to say her Eid prayer. We have seen women working, in Iran and in the West, wearing 'hijab'. They do their jobs with such modesty and dignity that no body can dare to look at them. But we have totally segregated men and women in some Muslim countries, which is not justified. We do not even allow them to work within guarded and well-protected precincts. There could be easy solutions to these problems. For example, for education at primary level, female teachers could be employed to teach the kids. They could impart better education to

¹ A Constitutional court established under article 203 of Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, to interpret Islam and act an appellate court in Islamic Hadood cases

² Limit prescribed by Allah

³ Prohibition of Zina (Enforcement of Had) Ordinance, 1979, which introduced Islamic punishments for various sexual offences

children by virtue of their filial affection. My considered view is that in the present times when humankind is awakened and vigilant, education is widespread, Women's Rights Movement is gathering momentum, we should change our attitude as our present thinking and attitude towards women folk are untenable.

(viii) Deliverance from Intellectual Slavery

We are living life of slavery in one form or the other since long. The religious class is tied to the past and does not want to move into the future. The modern segment of society is the slave of the West. The religious class is living in a decadent intellectual framework whereas the modern elite looks up to the West as the only source of knowledge and civilization. Owing to this intellectual slavery we have relinquished Ijtihad, academic research and independent thinking.

The West is leading the world in the domain of thought and research. The West has become a yardstick to distinguish right from wrong. We had fallen into slumber while the West kept on marching. The West now dominates the world by virtue of her knowledge and military strength. Our defeated and easygoing minds have accepted the West as the yardstick of right and material progress and development. This is one extreme. The religious class is on the other extreme. They think that every thing that comes from the West is 'Kufr'¹ and misleading. They hold that the Western philosophy and science owe their origin to atheism, secularism and materialism.

¹ Heretic

Our religious class is repeating the history of Christian Church. When Renaissance started in Europe, the Church considered new ideas repugnant to their long professed dogmas. Inquisitive courts were set up to award severe and exemplary punishments to scientists and pioneers of new intellectual movement but they could not suppress the nascent intellectual movement because it was rational and met the demands of time. The movement won this battle and the Church had to retreat because of its absurd and irrational behaviour. The battle was, in fact, waged between the leaders of the new and the old thinking. The clergy was waging war in the name of religion that is why it turned into a war between liberal ideas and religion. Our situation today is somewhat similar. Our religious class is following in the footsteps of Christian clergy, so a progressive religion, Islam, is being seen as a retrogressive one.

We are in a very difficult situation and have to do an uphill task. Firstly, we should abandon thinking that everything that comes from the West is profane. We should filter everything in the light of this golden principle of Islamic Jurisprudence:

"Adopt what is good and give up what is bad."

We must make distinction between right and wrong. We should acquire the good qualities of the West i.e., hard work, honesty, knowledge, urge for research, respect for human rights, concept of welfare state, democratic values, looking into future because wisdom is our lost object¹ we should pick it up, no matter from where it comes.

¹ A Hadith says that the wisdom is the lost property of the Muslims. In other words, they should reclaim it from wherever they can find it

Secondly, we have to get rid of intellectual slavery. We should critically examine the Western thought and civilization. The West can serve us as guide but it should not be our destination. We should try to understand the attitude of the West that harbours hostility towards religion and is sometimes animalistic. We should learn to trust and rely upon our own values without being dazzled by the exterior of the Western culture. We should make an effort to delve deep to reach reality to know whether human being is really happy and satisfied or the modern civilization has rendered him more grieved and frustrated?

Thirdly, we have to take up the intellectual leadership and determine the future direction of thought and culture. The job is Herculean one because: (i) we are intellectually very weak (ii) we are still undergoing period of intellectual slavery; and (iii) we have lagged far behind and could not keep pace with the march of time. But it always happened in history that weaker nations rose to power. In the beginning of our period, the Romans, the Greeks and the Persians held sway. We snatched world leadership from them in spite of being weak. We have to muster strength and regain power and leave the orbit of slavery to enter into the open atmosphere of world leadership. The Quran says:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

“We cause this alternation of night and day in the affairs of men”¹

¹ Al-Quran 3:140

Those who are victors are vanquished and those who are vanquished shall become victors: the down-trodden shall inherit the earth. The pre-requisite of all this is that we have to dedicate ourselves and some have to lay down their lives for the cause of knowledge. We have to light up candles in the darkness. It is the job of religious scholars and intellectuals to condemn mental slavery and persuade the people, especially the young, not to waste their time and energy to achieve ordinary and apparently dazzling things and to spend lives in the pursuit of real human development. They should not sell their self (Khudi) but delve deep into their self to gain moral and spiritual strength for it is the moral force that ultimately wins and conquers.

(ix) Reforming Mysticism

Spiritual dimensions of Islam need to be projected properly as mankind today is in search of spirituality. The young and educated Muslim minds are also fed up with the outer dimension of Islam and need to be exposed to the inner beauties of their faith. The inner dimension of Islam is generally known as Tazkiyah-i-Nafs (Purification of soul) or Tasawwuf (Mysticism or Sufism).

The real objective of Islam is to create link between man and his Creator. One part of it which is apparent is called 'Zahir' or Shariah, the other part that deals with spiritual and moral side is called 'Batin' (inner dimension) or Tasawwuf. The Shariah provides a basic framework so that man is saved from going astray but the moral development of man is based upon his own spiritual urge. The more he has the urge, the more he will spiritually progress. Mysticism treats man's spiritual urge and development. The mystics have taught the

lesson of love instead of fear of God. Their moto is this verse of Surah Al-Maidah:¹

فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ

"Whom He would love as they would love Him."

They laid emphasis on passionate love for Allah, because of this they also stressed on love for His creatures. Once a disciple of Baba Farid Ganj Shakar,² a renowned mystic, returned from a journey and he carried with him a pair of scissors as a gift for Baba Sahib. Bab Farid said to him, "You have brought for me a thing that cuts and severs. If at all you had to bring something for me as a present, you should have brought needle and thread that sews and joins."³ This was the character of Muslim saints that helped them spread Islam. This caring social behaviour decreased the enmity and the hostility that existed between Muslims and Non-Muslims for centuries. Because of their coming together and mixing with one another, the non-Muslims were influenced by Islam and entered its fold. Hunt, a renowned English poet, (1834) wrote a poem on a Muslim mystic, Abu Ben Adhem, in which he mentioned how Allah loves those who love His creatures.

¹ Al-Quran 5:54

² An early mystic of Chishti order who is disciple of Nizam-ud-Din of Dehli who was disciple of Moeen-ud-Din Chisti; buried in Pakpattan, Punjab, Pakistan

³ Waheed-ud-Din Khan Maulana, Fikir-e-Islami, page 131

Abou Ben Adhem

Abou Ben Adhem – may his tribe increase –
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold,
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the presence in the room he said:
 'What writest thou?' the vision raised its head
 And with a look made all of sweet accord,

Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
 'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so',
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
 But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,
 Write me as one who loves his fellow men.'

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
 It came again, with a great wakening light,
 And showed the names whom love of God had blest,
 And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Sufism today advocates renunciation and seclusion instead of forging links with the Universe and humankind whereas the genuine Sufism teaches renunciations of luxury and extremes in conduct and behaviour. The wrong conception of Sufism weakened the Muslim Ummah. According to Iqbal, the wrong concept of Sufism comes next to the fall of Baghdad as the cause of the downfall of the Muslims.

We were in a state of intellectual stupor when natural sciences were developing in the West. We, in general, remained cut off from the mainstream intellectual activities of the world. Our Sufism stressed on dreams and mystical experiences instead of making us focus our attention on the Universe. I am not saying that the sufis directly forbade people to study Sciences but because of wrong concepts, the temperament and attitude that we developed was unscientific rather anti-Science. Science diverts our attention towards the external physical world while we had riveted our attention and energies on Batin (the inner dimension). The spiritual journey never comes to an end. We could easily end it somewhere after having conquered the self, and would have tried to harness Nature and the Universe also.

At the time when great Sufis were born among us, Europe produced great scientists.

Jalal-ud-Din Rumi (1273)	Roger Bacon (1294)
Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1624)	Kepler (1630)
Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi (1739)	Newton (1727)
Syed Ahmad Shahid (1831)	James Watt (1819)
Muajar Makki (1899)	Darwin (1882)
Ashraf Ali Thanwi (1943)	Einstein (1955)

Our sufis no doubt, were great celebrities and they played a vital role in moral and spiritual development of our masses but it would have been better if we had also produced great scientists who could have promoted and advanced human knowledge. We would have achieved material progress along with spiritual attainment.

Sufism under the influence of teachings of Plotinus and Hindus' doctrine of Renunciation formulated a complex doctrine of thought and action that is not compatible, to a greater extent, with the simple Islamic teachings about spirituality. It all ran contrary to the beautiful equilibrium that Islam struck between matter and spirit and between temporal and other worldly affairs and which was the main objective of Islam.

We have suffered two major losses because of these wrong teachings. One was that Islam, instead of being a progressive and dynamic religion, turned into religion of asceticism and renunciation. Social, political and economic teachings of Islam were put on the back burner. Sheikh¹ became the focus instead of Allah. Islamic concept of collective life was replaced by individual intuition, mystical experience and individual spiritual exercises like meditation and zikir² whereas Islam has declared even worship and prayers as congregational acts. We have confined these to a silent corner of a Dervesh's³ Lodge or to wilderness or in a quiet room of their houses. The society began to disintegrate and collective life weakened. Spirituality became personal affair and communal life collapsed. The spiritual and psychic problems emerged because of absence of the collective force. The real objective of worship is better achieved when it is organized collectively. That is why Islam has laid stress on daily congregational prayer, Jum'a⁴ and Eid⁵ prayers and annual pilgrimage.

¹ Spiritual teacher

² Repetitions of certain sacred words

³ Seeker of truth

⁴ Weekly congregation

⁵ Two great congregational prayers held at the end of Ramazan fasting and in Zilhaj, the twelfth month of Hijra calendar

Iqbal has rightly said that worship produces better results when it is performed in congregation. The real worship is a collective act in Islam, which lays more emphasis on congregational prayers and annual pilgrimage instead of individual prayer so that it may enlarge the sphere of human association and the acts of worship increasingly and gradually become universal.

“The real object of prayer, however is better achieved when the act of prayer becomes congregational. The spirit of all true prayer is social. With Islam, however, this socialization of spiritual illumination through associative prayer is a special point of interest. As we pass from the daily congregational prayer to the annual ceremony round the central mosque of Mecca, you can easily see how the Islamic institution of worship gradually enlarges the sphere of human association.”¹

With the distorted Sufism, strange psychological problems have arisen at individual level. Every Tom, Dick and Harry has started claiming sainthood. People consider them persons of extraordinary powers. The Sufis started saying strange things in a state of intoxication. They were cut off from the realities of life and were lost in sham spiritual development. Hazrat Abdul Quddus of Gangoh is worth listening:

مجر بر فلک الا فلاک رفت و باز آمد
با خدا گرم رفتی ، هرگز نیامدی

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, P. 84

"Muhammad (peace be upon him) of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God, if I had reached that point, I should never have returned."

According to Iqbal that is the difference between the prophetic and mystic types of consciousness. The Sufi does not wish to return to his original general condition after having undergone unitary experience but the Prophets return and work for the welfare of mankind. They returned after having undergone the spiritual experience in order to over power the historical forces and create a new world of ideas and thought. For the mystic, this spiritual experience is final; for the Prophet it is awakening within him.

"Muhammad (peace be upon him) of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned.' These are the words of a great Muslim saint, Abd Al-Quddus of Gangoh. In the whole range of sufi literature it will be probably difficult to find words which, in a single sentence, disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between the prophetic and the mystic types consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of 'unitary experience'; and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The Prophet's return is creative. He returns to forces of history, and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals. For the mystic the repose of 'unitary experience' is something final; for the Prophet it is the awakening, within

him, of world-shaking psychological forces, calculated to completely transform the human world. The desire to see his religious experience transformed into a living world-force is supreme in the Prophet."¹

Our Sufis, in general, were lost in their mystical experience. There were few among them who return to their sober state and created a new world following in the footsteps of the Prophet. Their vertical development could not produce horizontal effects. Their prayers did not benefit humankind. So they became black hole for human capabilities. To combat unnecessary rationalism of Mutazellites², we projected and promoted mystical and intuitive experience of the Sufis that gave rise to an irrational and superstitions dimension to Islam.

Intellect is not the only source of knowledge but essential one in addition to Revelation. Intellect is essential as revelation itself addresses the intellect. We employed mystical experience to combat rationalism and considered intuition and mystical experience as the real source of knowledge excluding any role of reason. What Sufis said in a peculiar context and for a specific purpose, we generalized it. Farid-ud-Din Attar³ says:

صد ورق و صد کتاب را در نار کن
روئے دل را جانب دلدار کن

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, P. 111

² An early rationalist movement initiated by Waasil bin Atta during Abbasids period.

³ A great Persian Sufi

“Throw into fire hundred pages and hundred books and turn your heart to your beloved”

We deduced wrong results from such mystical discourses and poetic expressions. We have adopted an anti-intellectual attitude. We severed our link with books and knowledge. As a consequence, Sufism developed an irrational outlook. Owing to this, semi-literate Sufis fell prey to un-Islamic ideas and they could not perceive the onslaught of un-Islamic philosophies. They considered Ram and Rahim, Kirma and Kareem¹ one and the same thing.

The greatest harm that the Sufi thinking had done to Muslim personality is its doctrine of ‘negation of self’. The Sufi had to merge and lose himself in Shaikh (mystic teacher), then in the Prophet and ultimately in God². The concept of self-negation thwarted personal freedom and evolution. This annihilative psychological thinking gave birth to Pantheism that a person may become a part of Allah’s person. Ahmad Sarhindi (popularly called as Mujaddid Alf Thani) perceived the negative ramifications of this pantheism. He was not prepared to lose himself in God. Though relying on Allah’s mercy, he maintained and kept his separate identity. This affirmation of self is a basic prerequisite for human development. Humans cannot do any creative or productive work unless they self-actualize themselves by self assertion and affirmation. This tragedy befell upon us. Sufism absorbed the best minds of us, which fell victim to wrong interpretation

¹ Raam is name of God in Hindi language and Raheem in Urdu; similarly, Karma and Karim means benevolent. This refer to pantheistic movement of 17th century India where Hinduism tried to absorb Islam

² Fanaa-fil-Shaikh, Fanaa-fil-Rasool and Fanaa-fil-Allah

of Sufism, and annihilated themselves instead of asserting themselves on the world scene. They determined to root out the base human desires instead of restraining them; unnecessary humility destroyed their self-confidence. They could not come out of the state of ecstasy.

یہ ذکر نیم شبی ، یہ مراقبے ، یہ سرور
تیری خودی کے نگہاں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں

"This recitation of God's names at midnight, these meditations and this ecstasy, if they all are not guardian of your self, then it is all useless." ¹

We were caught in the web of 'Fanaa-fil-Shaikh' instead of developing self-confidence. God invited us to reflect upon the creation of the Heavens and the Earth and conquer the Nature but we asked people to obey Shaikh.

ہائے سجادہ رنگین کن گرت پیر مغان گوید
کہ سالک بے خبر نبود ز راہ و رسم منزلہا

"If the mentor orders you to fill the cup with wine, fill it because the mentor (Shaikh) knows the roads that lead to God."

This annihilative paradigm gave birth to an unhealthy personal reverence and personality cult that itself is very injurious to enquiry, research and education. When this worldview advanced, it declared that sainthood is superior to

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad

Prophethood¹. Saint assumed greater importance than the Prophet, which is un-Islamic altogether.

We declared all lawful things Haram (forbidden) for ourselves in the name of righteousness and piety. When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) decided not to eat honey for some minor reason, Allah disapproved of this act of the Prophet. We have abandoned many things, calling it obedience to Allah and His Prophet that Allah has bestowed upon us.

Once a very close friend of mine told me that his saint (Peer) was a great 'aabid' (worshipper) who had spent many years by standing on one leg, holding on to the branch of a tree. I could not tolerate this nonsense and instantly responded with the remarks that it was not the way of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who both worshipped and took rest. He forbade us to indulge in prayers for the whole night and keep fast for the whole year. I asked him whether his saint was more righteous and pious than the messenger of Allah?

This attitude is totally wrong and is highly disapproved in Islam. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has taught us the lesson of moderation and prescribed for us the middle path.

This type of "worship" reminded me of saint Mackerless who had stood in the mud for six months with 80 pounds of iron around his neck. Saint Usis had kept lying in a dry well for three years. The renowned hermit, Jonah, had

¹ There is a famous dictum of Bayazeed Bustaami: Al-wilaayat-tu afzal min-ul-naboowah

remained absorbed in his worship for three consecutive years. Saint Anthony had never committed the mistake of washing his feet and saint Abraham never washed his face for fifty years-¹ Subhan Allah! What a piety and righteousness! Our "malangs"² follow in their footsteps in the name of Islam, the religion of cleanliness and moderation. This tradition could pass on to succeeding generation in Christianity but there is no room for it in Islam.

We have to purge our Sufism of all inhuman and un-Islamic concepts and practices. Spirituality lies in the spiritual knowledge of God and obedience to the messenger of Allah and not in such hermitic life style. We have to adopt the Prophetic way and live among the people to work for their betterment by acquiring and radiating high manners and undergoing spiritual training. We have to distinguish spiritual experiences from psychological maladies. We have to inculcate and develop in ourselves love for humanity and humility in our behaviour. We have to consume ourselves in the cause of Allah and look for affirmation of individuality in the collectivity of life. We have to get rid of psychological delusions and life of dreams.³ In nutshell, we have to make Tariqah⁴ (Sufism) subordinate to Shariah.

¹ Nadvi, Abul-Hassan Ali, Rise and Fall of the Muslims and its Impact on the World, page 212

² Urdu word used for those spiritual lunatics who abandon the worldly affairs, put chains, special clothes etc on them and are found on roads or in and around shrines.

³ The so-called saints thrive on dreams in which they get indications and instructions.

⁴ Word used for spiritual process in contrast to legalistic Islam, Shariah.

یہ حکمتِ ملکوتی ، یہ علمِ لاہوتی
حرم کے درد کا درماں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں

"The Divine wisdom and this Divine knowledge if they do not treat or assuage the pain of Islam, it is all futile." ¹

(x) Real Concept of Jihad

What does Jihad mean in the present day scenario? In which situation and under what circumstances can our youth take up arms? Is Jihad done only by means of weapons? Under what circumstances, Jihad is not permissible with weapons? Could a sect of the Muslims wage Jihad against another sect of the Muslims? In which situation, is it personal obligation (Fard Ain) for the inhabitants of Muslim lands and under what circumstances is it communal obligation (Fard Kifayah)?

A lot of Muslim blood has been shed. We have lost hundreds of thousands of our youth. Now it is high time that we should reassess and reevaluate our strategy that has caused so much damage and loss of life without much positive tangible results.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) brought a total revolution in 23 years. In his lifetime, 81 battles were fought and he himself participated in 27 of these encounters. During all these, according to an authentic source, only 259 Muslims were martyred and 759 non-Muslims were killed. It is rightly called a 'bloodless revolution.' It was, in fact, a great

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Zarb-i-Kaleem, Tasawwuf

intellectual, spiritual and moral revolution that history has ever witnessed but with little bloodshed.

Let us have a glance at the movements that were launched in the name of Islam in the last century. Two and a half million Muslims were killed during Algerian war of Independence. Millions of people were killed in Indo-Pak war, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Chechnya. The same happened in Palestine, Syria, Egypt etc. It should not be construed from this that I am a pacifist and against waging armed struggle. My point simply is that we should re-consider and re-define the concept of Jihad and its various kinds and strategies in the light of the true teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah. Otherwise it would continue bleeding but we will not achieve anything really positive. Faiz Ahmad Faiz¹ perhaps is referring to our plight when he says:

نہ کوئی مدعی نہ کوئی منصف ، حساب پاک ہوا
یہ خون خاک نشیناں تھا ، رزق خاک ہوا

"No petitioner, no judge, the matter is settled;
it was the blood of the poor, so sucked by the
Earth"

In the Muslim world, Jihad is confused with 'Qital' (the fighting or armed struggle). Jihad is a misunderstood term not only by non-Muslims but also by a majority of Muslims who mistake it by war waged against the infidels till the latter surrender and submit themselves to Islam.

¹ A Pakistani poet of Urdu (1911-1984) Nuskha-ha-i-Wafaa

Jihad is a comprehensive term that covers all kinds of struggle in the way of Allah. The Quran says:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ^١

“And strive in his way as ye ought to strive”¹

While explaining this verse, Maulana Mawdudi remarks that Jihad is not simply ‘Qital’ but this word is used in the sense of long struggle and strenuous effort.² In the opinion of Sanaullah of Panipat, Jihad means struggle, expansion and power.³

In Surah Al-Furqan (which is revealed in Makkah) Allah addresses the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as follows:

فَلَا تُطِيعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا

“Listen not to the non-believers but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness”⁴

The words “Jihad-i-Kabeer” are used in this Makkan Surah when the believers were not allowed to take up sword even against the oppressors. Here the believers are directed to wage jihad, Jihad-i-Kabir, against the non-believers with the Quran and not with the sword. Jihad is, in fact, a life long

¹ The Quran: 22:78

² Mawdudi, Abul 'Ala, Tafheem ul-Quran Vol. 3 P. 253

³ Panipati, Sanaullah, Tafseer Mazhari Vol. 8, page 106

⁴ Al-Quran 25:52

struggle against evil at all levels. It requires a Muslim, like any other committed humanist, to engage in a peaceful moral struggle to root out injustice, exploitation, ignorance, poverty and all kinds of evil. Jihad also means in very specific circumstances and situations an armed struggle or to wage war. The Arabic word 'Qital' more accurately carries this meaning. The Muslims are advised to physically resist and fight against those enemies who subject them to persecution and repression and drive them out of their homes.

Jihad-i-Kabir has three connotations: (a) utmost individual endeavor where no tables are left unturned; (b) an all out and large scale struggle wherein all human as well as material resources are consumed for the cause; (c) a comprehensive struggle at every level and at every front.

The phrase Jihad-i-Kabir is further explained by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself. While returning from Tabuk¹ (It should be kept in mind that this was the only battle wherein the Prophet openly declared that the Muslims should make war preparation as Islamic State was in danger. The companions of the Prophet made great sacrifices and had left the ripe crops un-reaped) he said:

رجعنا من الجهاد الاصغر الى الجهاد الاكبر

"We are returning from a small Jihad to a bigger Jihad."

It means that he called his missionary (dawah) activities as Jihad-i-Kabir (great struggle) and armed struggle (Qitaal) as Jihad-i-Saghir (small struggle). It is related by

¹ It was his last war after conquest of Makkah. In this war, he went to face the Roman armies in the North

Hazrat Jabir, a companion of the Prophet, that a few soldiers came to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Prophet welcomed them and said, "You have returned from a smaller Jihad to a bigger Jihad". One of them asked the Prophet: "Rasulullah! What is the bigger Jihad?" He replied: "The man should wage Jihad against his own desires and temptations."¹

◦ One of the pre-requisites of Jihad is that a man should be conversant with Islam and he should consciously know that for what purpose he is waging Jihad; and he should also be aware of 'Kufr' and Jahaliyyah² against which he is waging Qital so that he may recognize 'Kufr' in any form it appears. Hazrat Umar (RA) has very aptly remarked in this context:

"I have an apprehension about a man who is raised in Islam but he does not know about Jahaliyyah, that he would disengage and loosen the cords of Islam."³

It seems that Hazrat Umar (RA) has foretold about our age. We have tarnished the image of Jihad, rather vulgarized it. Our rulers wage 'Jihad' sometimes for their own interest and sometimes at the behest of their foreign masters. And then declare it terrorism in their own interest or at the behest of somebody else. We should give up this ludicrous attitude forthwith. The rulers get the dollars and the youth shed their blood and lose their lives. The tears of their mothers dry up in

¹ Ibid, Tafseer Mazhari Vol 8 P. 318 and Shah, Karam, Zia-ul-Quraan, vol 3, page 369

² The world used as a antithesis to Islam

³ Nadvi, page 162, ibid

mourning and lives of their brides become barren. I just recall a couplet of Shakespeare:

"As flies to the wanton boys, we are to the gods
They kill us for their sport"

(xi) Need for Ijtihad

Permanence and change co-exist in human life. It is true about Islam. Some principles are of permanent nature and they are called 'Muhkamat'¹ in the terminology of the Quran e.g. Tawheed², Prophethood, Akhirah (after life), human dignity etc. There are certain things that undergo change with the passage of time. These changes are essential for survival of humankind. Islam has given a concept of Ijtihad³ in order to keep pace with the onward march of human civilization in terms of scientific, social, economic and philosophical developments.

Ijtihad does not mean creating a new religion but it means an interpretation and application of permanent principles of religion in every age. Ijtihad is not simply a technical issue but it is a human necessity and the demand of the time. For example, trade and business transactions were carried out on camels and in sailing boats, now ships, aeroplanes and Internet replace it. The basic principles of trade and business (truth, honesty, lawful profits, non-exploitation, safeguard of property and keeping one's promise etc.) will remain unchanged but issues arising out of modern means of business would be interpreted and solved by re-application

¹ Solid, permanent etc

² Oneness of Allah,

³ It means a constant reinterpretation of basic teaching of Islam keeping in view the change in society

and interpretation of these golden principles in the public interest. It is necessitated because boat trade is replaced by E-commerce.

Shatabi, in his popular book, *Al-Mawafaqat*, has remarked that the need for Ijtihad would remain till Doomsday for the reason that man has to follow Shariah (Divine Law) till the last day¹. The Shariah (Divine Law) only provides basic and broad principles but things change with the passage of time and new issues arise. In order to address these issues, basic and broad principles of Shariah are to be interpreted and applied by means of Ijtihad.

The word Ijtihad is derived from the root (juhud) that means 'to exert'. Ijtihad means to exert more and employ one's full capabilities. In religious terminology it means to exert one's utmost to address an issue in the light of broader principles of Shariah.

Ijtihad is of two types: (i) partial and (ii) total. Partial Ijtihad is to form an opinion after having applied the basic principle of Shariah (Divine Law) to a smaller commandment. One of its examples is that of Battle of Ditch (Ghazwa-i-Khandaq)². The Prophet, after the battle, commanded a group of people: "None of you will say his Asr³ prayer till he reaches Bani Quraizah⁴". The time for Asr set in before they reached their destination.

¹ Shatabi, *Al-Mawafaqat* Vol 4, chapter on Ijtihad

² In year 627 AD, 5th year of Hijrah

³ A daily prayer to be done sometimes before the sunset

⁴ Area of a tribe

They were divided into two groups. One was of the opinion that they would not say their prayer until they reach the destination as they were commanded so. They based their opinion on the very words of the Prophet. The other group held the opinion that they are getting late for Prayer and they should offer their Prayers, as the purpose of the commandment was to reach as early as possible. On their arrival when they mentioned this to the Prophet, he did not chide or reprimand anyone of them."¹ It means that he approved the interpretation of both the groups.

Total Ijtihad means to rise above the level of popular thinking in some situation to form a higher opinion in the greater interest of Shariah. In Prophet's lifetime the Treaty of Hudaibyyah² is the classic example. (The Prophet acted in the light of revelation and his acts are called Sunnah, which is the second source of Ijtihad. We should look at the examples from Sirah in a broader perspective). This Treaty was unilaterally concluded as all the conditions laid down by the Quraish were accepted by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Umrah³ was dropped. The words 'Rasulullah' (Prophet of Allah) were erased from the text of the treaty. Abu Jundal who had embraced Islam reached Madinah at the time when Treaty was being concluded. He was injured and bleeding but the Prophet returned him as per condition of Quraish.

All the companions were unhappy rather angry. Hazrat Umar (RA) complained to the Prophet and remarked that they had not concluded such type of Treaty even in

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari: Salat ul-Khauf 2:15

² In the sixth year after his migration to Medina (March 628)

³ Visit to Makkah

Jahaliyyah period and when they were weak. Now they had Divine guidance and are relatively powerful. But the prophet displayed far-sightedness. He rose above these ground realities and transient benefits and looked up to the future. History had witnessed the ramifications of this momentous Treaty. The Quran itself called it 'Fathi Mubeen' (a clear victory). The history proved that it turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the believers and it paved the way for further spread of Islam.

Take another example from the life of a renowned companion of the Prophet. For example, when Sohaib Rumi was persecuted by the Quraish, he emigrated to Madinah. The youth of Quraish stopped him and robbed him of his money while he was on his way to Madinah. He knew that one who is killed in defending his property is called martyr and he also knew the merits of martyrdom (Shahadah) but he did not resist and handed over all his possession to them. He dropped the idea of being blessed with Shahadah and handed over all his belongings to the youth in the greater interest of Islam. He saved his life and emigrated to Madinah to live and work for the whole of his life in the greater cause of Islam. This was an example of a total Ijtihad. It appears from the above vivid examples that, generally speaking, a total or partial Ijtihad is possible of any religious injunction or command.

Today we need a total Ijtihad that would lead to a wholesome reconstruction of religious thought. Iqbal had started this gigantic task of Reconstruction of Religious Thought as early as 1929. The immediate and urgent demand of the present day is that this should be carried out. The reconstruction will take place by means of a total Ijtihad for which our Ulama are not equipped to shoulder the

responsibility. Due to inadequacy of our scholars, the process has not yet begun.

Not only Ijtihad is desirable and obligatory in Islam, it is also an act of worship leading to spiritual reward. It is such an obligation, that in the process of Ijtihad, even if somebody commits a mistake, he will also be rewarded. It is reported by Amr Ibn Al-Aas that messenger of Allah said:

“When a judge gives a decision having tried his best to decide correctly and is right, he will have a double reward; and when he gives a decision having tried his best to decide correctly and is wrong, he will have a single reward.”¹

It appears from the above tradition that for the first person there are two rewards: one is for his effort that he made and the second is for his correct decision. Whereas for the second person, there is only one reward for his effort provided his intention is good. This settles another point also that Ijtihad must continue under all circumstances, no matter, we will commit mistakes. We have stopped making Ijtihad lest we should commit mistakes. This is contrary not only to the demands of the time but also to the teachings of Islam. That is why we are in a state of stagnation and disgrace and further humiliation appears to be our destiny.

Ijtihad though is obligatory but is a sensitive issue. Every Tom Dick and Harry does not qualify for it. There are a number of pre-requisites for a person who can do Ijtihad.

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim

Some of them, as laid down in our classic books, are as follows:

- He is well-versed in Arabic language
- He is well-versed in Quran
- He is scholar of Hadith
- He has studied the opinions of earlier great jurists
- He is conversant with Usul-at-Tafseer (principles of exegesis), Usul-al-Hadith (principles of Hadith criticism) and Usul-al-Fiqh (principles of Jurisprudence)
- He understands the spirit of Islam and has the knowledge of objectives of Shariah (Divine Law).
- He practically follows and carries out the Commands of Deen-i-Islam.

If we measure scholars around us by this yardstick, we will find quite a number of them who fulfill these conditions but still the doors of Ijtihad are closed and we face stagnation. One of the major causes of this behaviour is our belief in personality cult. We do not want to deviate from the verdicts and opinions of our earlier jurists. We do not encourage and approve of intellectual and academic criticism. However, we don't find such type of attitude in the beginning of Islam. The early history of our Jurisprudence does not reflect this intolerance. The classic example is that Imam Muhammad and Imam Abu Yusuf, the celebrated students of Imam Abu Hanifa, differed with his teacher on almost 85% of the issues.¹ Rather we have many such examples where even the companions of the Prophet differed and argued with him.

¹ Hamidullah, Dr Khutbat-i-Bahawalpur P. 92

Criticism and difference of opinion remain something of taboo in Muslim communities. When I was studying Law in the United Kingdom, I was amazed to find out the junior most lecturers levelling scathing criticism even on the decisions of the House of Lords, the highest court of Great Britain. They would lay bare the merits and demerits of these binding legal decisions, called precedents.

The fact of the matter is that criticism has acquired a great significance in the modern education system. To evaluate and criticize the opinions of great men is not something unusual. That is why they have developed a critical thinking and as a consequence there is fresh addition to knowledge every moment.

وہاں بدلتا ہے لفظ لفظ ، یہاں بدلتا نہیں زمانہ

“There the change takes place every moment
but here the Time does not change”¹

We have marked the circle of sanctity around our elders. Even a little difference with them amounts to blasphemy and is considered heresy. Difference of opinion with the elders, and respect for them are two different things. To differ with the celebrities is one thing and to have a regard for them is another. These two distinct things are confused.

Is it not historically true that a large number of companions of the Prophet differed with him on the proposed terms and conditions laid down in the Treaty of Hudabiyyah. They made their very serious reservations very clear. There are many instances to be quoted from the period of Khilafat-i-

Rashidah ¹. Is it not correct that Imam Abu Yousaf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Zufar differed with Imam Abu Hanifa on many issues? We know that the pupils² remained respectful to their teacher in spite of their difference of opinions.

Now we should give up this claim that there is no second opinion other than the four recognized legal schools of Islamic Law (Hanafi, Shafai, Maliki and Hanabali). There can be other opinions as well. Our most of the scholars of the past and the present times have a consensus on this point. Abdus Salam (1262 AD), Imam Shaukani (1834 AD), Ashraf Ali Thanwi (1943) and Shaikh Mustafa Al-Muraghi (1945), to quote a few of them, have stressed upon the need for Ijtihad.

Shah Wali ullah (1702-1762 AD) initiated an excellent effort of the total Ijtihad in the South Asian Subcontinent. He rightly laid stress on communal structure of Islam and its social justice. Jihadi Movement of Syed Ahmad Shaheed (1831 AD), Deoband, Jamia Millia, Nadwa-tul-Ulema³, Jamat-i-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, Allama Shibli Nomaani, Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan and Allama Iqbal, almost all, somehow or other, are deeply influenced by Shah Wali ullah. But with due respect to Shah Waliullah, as I consider him a great mind in our history, I would dare say that even he could not perceive correctly the dangers of the modern times. The new issues of the present day had already reared their heads in his time and Shah also remained indifferent and ignorant about new developments in Natural as well as Social Sciences.

¹ Caliphate of first four Caliphs after the death of the Prophet.

² Called Sahibain (Yusuf and Muhammad) and Shaikhain (Abu Hanifa and Abu Yusuf); we commonly find such expression in Islamic Fiqh books, 'The ruling is on the Fatwah of Shaikhain';

³ Three major seminaries of Islamic learning in India

It was not proper for Shah Wali ullah to divulge his mystical experiences to the people. He should not have revealed what he saw in his dreams i.e. he is the 'sustainer of the world'¹. The Muslims need to be delivered out of the trance of collective mystical lethargy and peculiar psychological states of mind. These spiritual and mystical experiences may be beneficial to the individuals and should not be made public. Such exotic experiences can neither be made basis for interpreting Deen nor be quoted as an evidence of truth of the religion. We have to make purely the verified religious teachings and intellect as the yardstick. The age of dreams and mystical experience (kashf) has gone. It can be beneficial to our own individual self but to suggest and prescribe personal experience for the community is harmful.

Shah also remarked that Imam Shafai (820AD) would never be succeeded by any other total Mujtahid.² In other words, it means that the doors of total Ijtihad were closed but the time did not stop with Imam Shafai, it is running its normal course. The actual fact is that circumstances and normal conditions have completely changed rather they change after every ten years in this age of internet. It is not feasible to live in the age of Imam despite of our all reverence and regard for him. I don't say that new principles be formulated but this much I dare say that new interpretation of classic principles and their re-application is binding on us.

In the age of Shah Wali ullah, the Renaissance, under the influence of the Muslims, in Europe had already started rather the Industrial Revolution was beginning. The European

¹ Qayyum-uz-Zammaan

² Khan, Waheed ud deen, Fikri-Islami P. 53

traders, missionaries, tourists, scientists etc were busy in their specific fields. The British had conquered Madras in 1639 AD and Bombay in 1661AD. Most of the coastal areas of the Subcontinent were occupied by the Europeans by virtue of their science and technology. Shah did not pay any heed to these new developments.

Shah Wali ullah discussed in detail the rules and issues of Jihad and Qital but gave little space to dawah work. His works are mostly silent on this important issue of religion. Militant thinking has dominated and still dominates the minds of Muslim youth whereas Islam wants to develop Dawah oriented thinking among its followers. Deen owes its existence to it and in future it will be sustained by it. The Jihadi movement of Syed Ahmad Shaheed in India (1831AD), Ikhwan-al-Muslameen¹ and the history of Taliban² witness to the fact that despite the sacrifices of millions of youth, they could not make Islam a dominant force. That is why pen is more important than sword in Islam. The religion of Islam started with 'Iqra'³ (Read) instead of sword. That makes the difference. The result of this misplaced emphasis is before us.

Long before Shah Wali ullah, Galileo (1642 AD) and Newton (1727 AD) had brought about revolution in the field of Sciences. Shah remained ignorant about these scientific developments. His classic work, Hujjatullah Al-Baligha, was published in 1870 for the first time whereas Europe had been printing and publishing books for the last four hundred years.

¹ Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt founded by Hasaan-al-Banaa.

² Of Afghanistan who were bombed and toppled by the Americans after 9/11

³ Refer to first revelation: 'Read in the name of thy Lord! The Quran:

I am a great admirer of services of Shah Wali ullah. He rendered the Quran into Persian for the first time and it opened an avenue for understanding the Divine Revelation.. His Madressah, Raheemia, played a pivotal role in spreading Islamic learning. Here I am not criticizing him but what I mean is that there is an urgent need of a total Ijtihad. We need many people, like Shah, at every time at many places who can reinterpret the golden principles of Islam in the ever changing circumstances. Unfortunately, the process has stopped in the Islamic world. After Ibn Taiymiah (1328 AD), we had no one worth the name except Shah Waliullah (1762 AD). And then, there is a prolonged deadly silence.

By Ijtihad it is also meant that the leadership of the Muslims should be qualified enough to address the new issues confronting the Ummah at individual and communal levels. They should be so acquainted with the spirit of Islam, Shariah, and modern developments that they could solve the problems of the Muslim community. They must be knowledgeable, wise and committed to the cause. They should have the ability to exploit the forces that operate in the vast Universe and they could make them to serve the purpose of Islam and humanity.

Unfortunately, our situation today is quite the opposite of what Islam expected of us. Our leadership is in the hands of a corrupt elite who is devoid of intellect and knowledge; it has neither faith nor morality. If anything they possess at all, it is all lust for power and wealth. They pretend their likeness and sympathy for Islam when they are in need of vote or to perpetuate their rule. The irony is that the Islamists, in general,

become a source of strength for the corrupt ruling elite. Take the examples of General Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan¹ and General Omar Bashir of Sudan², both were supported by the Islamists in the delusion that they will enforce Islam.

This intellectual sterility has led to the fall of the Muslim Empires. Sayyed Abul Hasan Nadwi, writes about the downfall of Turkish Empire:

"The greatest malady that the Turks were afflicted with was their stagnation; the intellectual stagnation as well as the stagnation in the arts of war and military organization. They completely forgot the ayah of the Quran: Prepare against them whatever arms and cavalry you can muster, that you may strike terror in (the hearts of) the enemies of God and your own).³ They also forgot the saying of Prophet Muhammad: "The word of wisdom is the cherished object of the believer, wherever he finds it, he is more entitled to it.

They should have kept in their minds the advice of Amr-ibn-Al-Aas, the conqueror of Egypt, to the Muslims of Egypt, especially when they were surrounded by their rival empires and nations of Europe—"You never forget this that you are always in a state of

¹ Military dictator who imposed military rule in 1977 and died in 1988⁵ in a plane crash; he introduced certain measures in the name of Islamization. ~~military~~

² He led a military coup in 1989

³ Al-Quran 8:60

danger till Doomsday. You are at a strategic point. You should always be on your guard and equipped with the latest weapons you can afford because you are surrounded by your enemies from all sides. They have their eyes on you and on your territory.

Not only the Turks and their intellectual and religious circles, but the whole Muslim Ummah was undergoing a period of academic stagnation and intellectual decline. The intellect seemed exhausted and the mood depressed. If we don't take the 8th century signaling the beginning of intellectual decline, then there is no doubt that 9th century of Hijrah is the last century to witness the signs of creative thinking, Ijtihad, promotion of poetry, literature, Sciences and Arts. You study the biographies of the religious scholars of last centuries, you will not find a single name whom you could apply the word 'genius' or any body who produced something original. There are a few exceptions in the last centuries-who rose far above the ordinary academic level".¹

The same painful state of affairs continues today as it was found in the Turkish Empire. There is same stagnation, the same ignorance about what is going on around us. We face the same dangers and deterioration. We have the same exhaustion and same depression. We do not have any

¹ Nadvi, Abulhassan, 'Decline of Islam and its Impact on the World' page 189

intellectually courageous scholar. We have not produced a single genius during the last five hundred years. Just look at the list of the names of the philosophers, scientists and scholars of Europe in the same period. In the field of Science, we find Copernicus, Bruneo, Galileo, Keplar, Newton, Darwin, and Einstein. In Philosophy, we come across philosophers like Hume, Hegel, Kant, Spinoza, Bacon, Voltaire, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Bergson. In Economics, we see intellectual giants like Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Karl Marks and Keynes. In Literature, we find Stalwarts like Milton, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelly, Keats, Tolstoy, and Victor Hugo and in Psychology, celebrities like Freud, Adler, Jung and William James.

There is a long list of luminaries in almost every field that Europe produced during this period. If you visit any street in London you will find street signs carrying the names of the scientists and scholars and the period during which they had lived there. The houses they had lived in are still intact and these are so well preserved that it looks that the owners have just left their houses and will come back soon. On the other hand, we have wiped out all the vestiges of our elders in Saudi Arabia in the name of revival of Islam. We had destroyed the treasures of the centuries in a few days. What more horrific act than this could be!

I have argued above that Islam needs a total Ijtehad. Islamic thought needs a total reconstruction keeping in view the fundamental developments that have occurred during the last five hundreds years. However, for argument sake, I can identify a number of issues that call for an urgent Ijtihad and request the qualified Islamic scholars to look into these.

(a) Muslim Minorities

What should the behaviour of the Muslim communities or individual Muslims wherever they are living as a minority? Is it binding on them to observe the laws of the countries they live in despite the fact it differs from certain Islamic principles? Our books of Fiqh (Islamic Law) do not address these issues as these were written when the Muslims were ruling elite. In these books, it is presumed that the Muslims are in majority and have their governments, so the Muslims are not discussed as a minority. The Muslims reared up in this paradigm, therefore, suffer from a 'majority mentality'.

It has done Muslim Ummah great harm that the Muslim minority has adopted the 'majority mentality' that gives birth to a number of problems especially in Europe and America. Due to this, a negative perception and thinking has developed about Islam and the Muslims. Umar Bakri, the former head of Hizb al-Tahreer, during his interview with BBC Television, once claimed that it is part of his faith that he hoists flag of Islam at 10 Downing Street (British Prime Minister's House and Office). Is it proper in Islam to bluster and express such political rhetoric when the Muslims are living there as a citizen in United Kingdom enjoying all the protections afforded to their citizens? This irresponsible attitude is creating a plethora of serious problems for Muslim minorities settled there. If it is not Islam and definitely it is not Islam, then we should give up such blustering.

(b) Rights of Minorities

What are the rights and duties of minorities living in the Muslim communities or states? Our books of Fiqh still look at minorities in the perspective of new conquests that they are Zimmi¹. Their dress would be different from that of us and

¹ Protected people

they would pay Jizyah (war tax) etc. This matter is to be reconsidered whether the same principles are to be applied in case of minorities in Pakistan, Iran, and Indonesia which are settled Muslim majority states with written Constitutions guarantying fundamental rights to all citizens without any discrimination on the basis of creed or religion?

The Political Philosophy, Constitutional Law and International Law have made tremendous developments in respect of the protections of the rights of the minorities which have been reflected in the Constitutions of Muslim countries. Our religious mind does not support these developments. Our Fiqh needs to be revised in the light of advances made for the protection of minority rights during the last fourteen hundred years especially after the First World War. When we maltreat the minorities, our image is distorted at national and international levels. The argument is made that this is Islam, which has conditioned this type of maltreatment. We need to improve our image, not to further distort it.

(c) Women Rights

The opinions and laws are formulated in a specific social milieu. Similarly, opinions and laws relating to women were formulated in a specific political and social perspective. National and International laws have tremendously changed and developed for the last one thousand years but religious interpretations have not been made compatible with them. As a consequence, the perception has emerged that woman is not equal to man in Islam. They have no equal rights. This perception is erroneous.

Islam is a religion of human dignity and equality. We should reevaluate the laws relating to women especially second

marriage laws, laws of evidence, Hudood Ordinance¹ etc. We should also see to it that whether our expulsion of woman from our cultural and religious activities is justifiable or is it purely based upon emotionalism?

(d) Financial Matters

We are still mired in the first century Hijrah in respect of financial doctrines. Economics and Finance have completely changed during the last four hundred years. It has undergone a change not only at local level but it is now internationally oriented to a greater extent. The issue of interest has assumed a greater significance in the modern economic system. It is an integral part of present economy. We have declared it *haram* (unlawful) but we have not worked out any alternative to it or on one pretext or other we accept it as *halal* (lawful).

What does interest mean? It calls for a serious thinking and reflection. Is it absolutely *haram* (unlawful) or some of its types or manifestations are unlawful? What we shall do when interest is entrenched in international trade? If it is absolutely *haram*, then how the modern banking system should be run? How should Madaarabah, Musharakah² be operated? How should the issues of insurance and prize bonds etc be addressed? How would we receive the savings from the people and how would these be protected and invested? How should the people's money be saved from the harmful effects of depreciation and inflation? How do we deal with the non-Muslims in various economic and financial dealings? This demands a lot of study and analysis with a cool mind for which we are not ready and equipped. Modern Islamic

¹ Hudud Ordinances were introduced by General Zia-ul-Haq, the military dictator of Pakistan (1977-1988) as part of his Islamization process.

² Modes of Islamic banking

literature on Economics is not only scant, it is very superficial also. We need serious Islamic thinkers parallel or superior to Adam Smith and Karl Marks to challenge the irrational orthodoxy of the Islamic economic thinking.

(e) Jurisprudence and Law

The Jurisprudence and Law were special disciplines for the Muslims. The extraordinary codification of Fiqh in the earlier period is a clear proof of it. The law is an on-going process that changes and develops with social evolution. The greater the life is becoming complicated, the more the law is expanding. We are still working within the legal framework that existed one thousand years ago and which does not cater for the needs of the present day. New disciplines came into being in the modern times. There has been a tremendous progress and development in some of the fields of life but we have ignored them. Banking, insurance and communications to quote a few of them. We have no guidance for these complicated issues from the Islamic point of view and the irony is that we do not accept these issue as issues.

The Criminal Law in our Fiqh is mostly a personal matter. Modern Jurisprudence has quite a different approach in this context. Civil matters, in the modern Jurisprudence, are personal affairs while criminal matters are between the individual and the state. If for example, Akbar kills Aslam. When Akbar is prosecuted and his trial starts in a Court of Law, it is called as 'State versus Akbar'. It means that Akbar has committed a crime against the state or the society at large and the state is acting for the society. The state takes revenge from Akbar or awards him punishment for itself and for Aslam as well.

When we consider murder as personal matter, we give the right to the Wali (legal heir or guardian) to forgive the culprit or get blood money called diyat. In some cases,

murderers become legal heirs and forgive themselves, which is nonsense. A few religious scholars of the present times have worked on this issue and have made some headway. They argue that some crimes of this nature could be brought under the heading of 'Fasad Fil-ard'¹ where state is a party and courts can refuse to forgive despite the fact that legal heirs have waived the offence for free or have compounded for a consideration.

There was no such clear-cut division of law, between civil and criminal, when our Fiqh was codified. Now this division of law is recognized and accepted by all the established legal systems of the world. It is imperative to consider and study seriously these issues of the Jurisprudence. We should look into the matter and see whether crimes of this nature could be brought under the heading of 'Fasad Fil-ard' where state is a party. This distinction is very significant. After having accepted this principle of jurisprudence we have to change our many laws. Islam has laid great emphasis on 'Maruf' (What is accepted/prevalent in the society). The Quran is very clear about it. Among our early Jurists, Imam Abu Hanifa has accepted this as a basis for interpretation and application of Islamic Laws. We need to consider present day 'Maaruf'.

(f) Religious and Worldly Education

The question 'whether the religious and secular education are two separate kinds of education or knowledge is the unity' needs a careful consideration. Is acquisition of

¹ Public Disorder, a term in Islamic Law where state gets certain rights not to forgive

scientific knowledge as important as learning Fiqh or it is not worth pursuing?

We treat religious education as a matter fit for reward in Hereafter and secular education as a sin. Even if do not treat it a sin, we underestimate its value. This has resulted in expulsion of our religious class from the circle of modern education. Furthermore, our religious minded youth has adopted a negative attitude towards modern education that refrains them from making any significant progress in material life. This is the question of life and death for all of us and calls for an Ijtihad. We have to change and revise our educational curriculum and methodology of teaching in the light of this Ijtihad.

I have only referred to a few of the issues as a matter of principle and example. Much much more is required to be done. The Organization of Islamic Conference should shoulder this responsibility. It should draw up a list of topics first and then prepare a detailed questionnaire on each topic. Then topics with questionnaires should be sent to Islamic scholars to seek their opinions. When it receives opinions of scholars, then these shall be widely circulated to other scholars to seek their comments leading to exchange of views with one another. Then an international conference is convened where ulama and scholars get together and after having carried out mutual consultation and discussion, reach a consensus on various issues. Rabita Aalim Islami, Motamar Aalim Islami and other prestigious religious institutions of the Muslims can also take up this task to achieve the desired goals and objectives.

(xii) Propagation of Islam

Our Deen Islam is the last message of Allah to humankind. It began with Adam (AS) followed by Hazrat Ibraheem, Hazrat Musa (Moses) and Hazrat Esa (Jesus) and culminated in the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Quran has explicitly declared:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"Today I have perfected your system of belief and bestowed my favours upon you in full, and have chosen submission (al-Islam) as the creed for you" ¹

On the one hand, there is this declaration from God-Almighty, the Creator of the Universe that He has completed the Deen and fourteen years have passed since this declaration. On the other hand, the life is fast moving and the time is running at its high speed. Time and tide wait for none. Iqbal has beautifully expressed this idea in the following couplet:

تو اسے پیمانہ امروز و فردا سے نہ ناپ
جاوداں ، پیہم رواں ، ہر دم جواں ہے زندگی

"Don't measure it by the yardstick of today and tomorrow; the life is eternal, continuously moving and ever young"

¹ I-Quran 5:3

We have two principles before us. One is that the Divine message has been completed and perfected and it will remain a source of guidance for mankind till Doomsday. The second principle is that the circumstances and the situations change with the passage of time and the demands of time also undergo change. In order to apply these two principles to catch up with time, Islam has recommended two activities: Ijtihad and Dawah (propagation).

The need for Dawah becomes all the more necessary because new challenges and issues prop up every now and then. Islam had been the target of cultural and ideological onslaughts at difficult times of history. Even today, at this age of trial and tribulation, new Crusades have been launched against the Muslims. In these circumstances, it is the challenge of time to present the real teachings of Islam properly. Besides this, Dawah is also essential to improve the present lot of the Muslims. We have already talked about Ijtihad, now I would like to discuss certain points in respect of Dawah.

(a) Imammat (Leadership)

The Quran says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ

بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

"Of all the communities raised among men, you are the best, enjoining the good, forbidding the wrong." ¹

¹ Al-Quran 3:110

This verse declares that we have been assigned the task of world leadership and guidance for humankind. We have to prove ourselves up to the mark in respect of conduct and behaviour. We have to inculcate and develop in ourselves all those moral and intellectual traits that qualify us for world leadership. We have to establish good and root out evil. As this task has been assigned to us, now it is obligatory on us to understand and realize what our responsibilities are:

سبق پھر پڑھ صداقت کا ، عدالت کا ، شجاعت کا
لیا جائے گا تجھ سے کام دنیا کی امامت کا

“Learn again the lesson of truthfulness, justice and valour as the mantle of the leadership of the world will fall upon you once again.” ¹

The Quran says:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ
عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

“We made of you an Ummah justly balanced that you might be witness over the nations, and the prophet witness over yourselves.” ²

This verse is an announcement of assumption of worldly leadership by the Muslim Ummah. The ‘Ummah justly balanced’ means a community of high morals and

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Bang-i-Dera, Taalu-i-Islam

² Al-Quran 2:143

conduct that would uphold principles of justice and equity and tread the middle path. And it would be guide and leader for the comity of nations. The Muslims have been made 'justly balanced' so that they may act as witness over men and the prophet as witness over them (the believers). The Prophet would give witness on the Day of Reckoning that he had delivered the message of Truth and Justice to humankind and the Muslims would give witness that they had conveyed the message of God and His Prophet to the whole of mankind.¹

The task of Imamah and Dawah is the highest job in the world. The Quran says: "Whose word is better than his who calls to God and works righteousness, and says; 'I am of those who bow in Islam'"²

This is the top rung of the ladder of faith and belief. The best thing for a believer is to practise what is ordained by God and to invite people to their Creator.

(b) Wisdom

Dawah is to be imparted with wisdom and as a word of good advice. The Quran says:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

"Call them to the path of your Lord with wisdom and words of good advice."³

¹ Mawdudi, Abu 'Ala, Tafheem Al-Quran Vol 1 and footnote 144

² Al-Quran 41:33

³ Ibid, 16:125

Dawah work is not to be done with stupidity but it should be carried out in a wise manner keeping in view the specific situation and the psychology of the addressee. Human psychology is always to be kept in mind while preaching. Both human intellect and sentiments are to be addressed during Dawah.

(c) Commitment

Dawah is to be done with dedication, affection and commitment. There should be an earnest desire to reform the people around. This sincerity and pain of the preacher must be felt by the people. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to consume himself in preaching activities. The Quran says:

لَعَلَّكَ بَخِيعٌ نَفْسِكَ إِلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

"You may perhaps wear out your heart because they do not come to belief" ¹

The same idea you will find in verse 6 of Surah al-Kahaf, when the Prophet grieves for their aberration and moral deterioration. God comforts him.

(d) Objective of Life

Dawah itself is the objective of life. Hazrat Yousaf (Joseph) (AS) declared as per the Quran:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ

“Say: My way, and that of my followers, is to call you to God with full perception”.¹

The objective of life is not to seek rank and amass wealth and property but its aim is to spread Dawah. To call people to the path of God is obligatory on every Muslim and is the sole objective of his life. Iqbal says:

ہم تو جیتے ہیں کہ دنیا میں تیرا نام رہے
کیا یہ ممکن ہے کہ ساق نہ رہے ، جام رہے

“We live that your name live in the world; can it happen that there is no cup-bearer but there is a cup.”²

The minimum requirement is that there should always be a group of people who do Dawah work.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“So let there be a body among you who may call to the good, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil”³

¹ Al-Quran 12:108

² Iqbal, Muhammad, Bang-i-Dera, Shikwa

³ Al-Quran 3:104

The activity of Dawah is not only meant for others, the preacher would, while calling others to God, reforms himself. It addresses all, Muslims and non-Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has given a beautiful similitude to explain the distinction between a person who is observing hudood Allah (the limits Allah has prescribed for a person not to transgress) and the person who is going to transgress the limits:

“There were two groups of people travelling in a ship. They took their seats in the upper and the lower portions by drawing lots. The group sitting in the lower portion, when they need water for them, went upstairs to fetch water. They thought they were causing trouble to the people above, decided to make a hole in the ship to get water direct from the sea. If the group living in the upper portion of the ship did not refrain them from committing this stupid mistake, the ship would sink and all of them would be drowned.”¹

This Hadith makes this point very clear that the survival of the Muslims lies in forbidding people to do evil otherwise they would be wiped out. When we start calling people to the path of Allah, first our own lives would be influenced by the teachings we preach.

This is an aspect of Deen that we have ignored and neglected. This needs a deep reflection and consideration. Those who

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sunan Tirmizi

work in the field of Dawah feel in their sub conscious that they are doing great favours to people by reaching out to them. They lack wisdom and politeness. They do not use words of good advice. It is their part time job and has not made it the main objective of their lives. We shall ponder upon the fact that it is obligatory on all of us as a community especially the Ulama and the intellectual elite to focus our attention on this issue.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

Human life undergoes change every moment. Movement is the basic principle of life. Islam, being a religion close to human nature (Deen-e-Fitra), is the religion of positive and comprehensive change. It believes in the unchangeable realities of faith and at the same time it exhorts and urges the believers to continue striving for change.

In the earlier period, the Muslims met every challenge with positive and befitting response. They held the intellectual and political leadership of the world. They deeply influenced other cultures and civilizations.

But after sometime they started stagnating and could not keep abreast of changing times. Time have left them far behind. They do not have a respectable position in the comity of nations. Poverty, ignorance, disgrace, humiliation and helplessness have become their destiny.

It is imperative that we should make a serious study of our present plight. We should undergo a process of self-evaluation and criticism and for the time being do not waste much of our time on accusing others of conspiracies against us. We should look into ourselves and find out where we have committed mistakes. How to rectify them and how we can restore our lost prestige and honour? If we find that our

thinking needs to be reformed or it calls for change with the changing circumstances, we should change it immediately. If our actions need reform, we should change them and improve them forthwith without wasting time. It will save our time.

But we have closed the roads that lead to the change of thinking. The knowledge increases by asking questions and discussions while we discourage asking questions. Questioning and enquiry are very desirable activities but we shun them as bad deeds due to our ignorance.

We have labeled all our scholars (ulama) with the extraordinary titles like Razi-e-Dooaran (Razi of the Times), Ghazzali-e-Dooraan (Ghazzali of Times), Ameer-i-Shariat (Leader of Islamic Law), Pir-e-Tareqat (Saintly Leader) etc, so we do not believe in questioning and criticizing them. We believe in the personality cult that has discouraged us to question or criticize any idea or personality.

For a long time we considered the translation of the Quran as 'Kufr' (infidelity) until Shah Wali ullah translated it into Persian in 18th century. We kept the people deprived of the translation of the Quran for eleven hundred years while they could not understand Arabic in which the Quran was revealed. Why did we deprive them of this book of guidance? Did Shah Wali ullah commit any infidelity by translating the Quran? If he did not commit any 'Kufr', then why we did not allow any body before him to translate it? It means that we do not understand the dictates of time and if at all we understand, we understand it too late and with a very heavy price.

Take another example. We have not changed our legal opinions for the last thirteen hundred years about the husband

who has disappeared.¹ We have not bothered to think that this period exceeds the normal age of a person and again the question is: what is the fault of the woman who is forced to wait for her lost husband for seventy or eighty years? Is she not a human being? Does she not have her human desires and needs? A few years ago, Council of Islamic Ideology² of Pakistan gave the opinion that only seven years are enough to wait for the husband who has disappeared but not the period of seventy or eighty years. What was the fault of millions of women whom we have deprived of these natural necessities of life for centuries and kept them deprived of their lawful needs? We declared the use of loudspeaker as *haram* (unlawful) for one hundred years and now we have allowed using it to the extent that no religious scholar makes speech without the loud speaker. Every patient or student in the street is the target of this nuisance. How it became *halal* (lawful) today when it was declared *haram* (unlawful) yesterday? Similarly, we had declared the printing of the Quran as *haram* for more than one hundred years. We, in fact, do not accept any change whereas the Time is ever changing.

وہی زمانے کی گردش پر غالب آتا ہے
جو ہر نفس سے کرے عمر جاویداں پیدا

¹ Imam Abu Hanifa has opined that if a husband disappears, the wife has to wait for more than seventy years and only then she can go to court for dissolution of marriage for re-marriage

² A constitutional body mainly consisting of Ulema who has an advisory jurisdiction to advise government on Islamic issues

"He overrides the ups and down of time who can create immortality from every moment." ¹

It is the basic principle that most of the interpretation of the Divine Injunctions, to a greater extent, depend upon economic and social consciousness of the age. The interpretations change with the change of consciousness. Furthermore, the reason and common sense demand that we should accept the change and accept it quickly and with large-heartedness. We should not be reactionary, for it will waste our time. It gives birth to negative thinking and opinion in the society and the world at large that tarnishes the image of Islam.

An odd and strange thinking has developed in our religious class that criticism of the Muslims is taken for criticism of Islam. To criticize one opinion in Islam is considered criticism on Islam itself whereas there is a lot of difference between the two. If some interpretations of Islam are not compatible with the present day or some interpretations of Islam were adopted in the past in specific situations, the change that occurred during the period must be understood and taken into account.

Abiding by 'Muhkumat' (the established truths) the principle of change should be accepted. The better interpretations be adopted. We think that to insist on a wrong opinion is to protect Islam. This is absolutely wrong. It has done great harm to Islam. For example, if we adopted extreme views in respect of women's evidence and four marriages or have accepted an opinion of a specific legal school of thought that is not compatible with the present day needs, we should

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Zarb-i-Kalim, Takhleeq

rethink and revise this opinion to serve Islam and humankind. If something is wrong with the Hudood Ordinances¹, it should not be taken for Hudood for there is no mistake or fault in Hudood. They are two different things.

We have become reactionaries. If any suggestion comes up for reform, we instantly reject it; rather consider it contrary to Islam. This is not the way to defend Islam. As we all are aware of this fact that the Hanafi fiqh is not the Fiqh that Imam Abu Hanifa codified. This contains most of the opinions of his pupils—Imam Abu Yousaf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Zufar but is called the Fiqh-e-Hanafi. It is named after Abu Hanifa because the principles of interpretations adopted were that of Imam Abu Hanifa. That is why ulama of the present day can interpret afresh in the light of these principles.

Our history is a witness to the fact that our ulama (religious scholars) and jurists changed their opinions with the change of situations and circumstances. In the earlier periods women were allowed to offer their prayers in the mosque. We revised this decision later on and considered it not proper for them to participate in the congregational prayers. To pronounce three divorces at one time were considered unlawful but later on, we declared them as lawful. Now a move has been launched by many Islamic scholars that pronouncement of three divorces at one time shall be prohibited and penalized.

We have tarnished the image of Islam. Islam is a religion of peace and we have turned it into religion of war and blood. Islam believed in the dignity of man and we have

¹ Laws introduced by General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-1988) in the name of Islam; the laws have been much criticized.

disgraced and humiliated others in the name of Islam. It was the religion of justice and we have used it to perpetuate repression and injustice. Islam gave women their rights but we downgraded and repressed them in the name of Islam. It was the religion of progress and development and we have made it religion of poverty and backwardness.

Our masses are engaged in rituals and our ruling elite lives a life of extravagance and luxury. The affluent class has submerged itself in wealth and the intellectuals are torchbearers of Jahaliyyah. We enjoy no respect and honour in the comity of nations. Now it is high time we come out of the state of intoxication and get rid of slavery. We have to work to restore self-confidence and make progress.

Who is to take up the responsibility of reforming the society? All of us should feel the responsibility to carry out the reforms. In this situation, the greatest responsibility lies on the shoulders of ulama (religious scholars) because they uphold the higher teachings of religion. They are the guardians of moral condition of the Muslims and the brilliant traditions of Islam. This class has produced celebrities and luminaries like Abu Hanifa, Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymiah, Ghazzali, Mujaddid Alif Thani and Shah Wali ullah.

My humble suggestion is that the Ulama, intellectuals, political workers should get together to consult and exchange views with each other. They should realize the sensitivity of the situation and suggest some way out of the crisis. They should project and promote the real teachings of Islam. They should lead the new generation and be the pioneers of the change. And the people then will force their rulers to behave properly.

All this is not impossible. Disappointment and frustration is 'Kufr'. Change is a reality of life. The nations rise and fall. Our downfall could be transformed into our rise. To

achieve all this, we have to work hard and make extra ordinary efforts. We have to change ourselves from within and bring about revolution in the society. Our target should be a complete revolution, the revolution that gives a new life to the individuals and communities. We have to revive the dead hearts and infuse new spirits and faith in the Muslims. We have to delve deep into our own selves and utilize all resources at our disposal to materialize the Dreams.

آبِ روانِ کبیر! تیرے کنارے کوئی
دیکھ رہا ہے کسی اور زمانے کا خواب

عالمِ نو ہے ابھی پردہ تقدیر میں
میری نگاہوں میں ہے اس کی سحر بے حجاب

"Flowing Guadalquivir River Here on your bank is one;

Gazing on things gone by, dreams of another day

Destiny's curtain till now muffles the world to be;

Yet, already, its dawn stands before and unveiled.¹

¹ Iqbal, Muhammad, Bal-i-Jibril, Masjid-i-Qurtabah. It is one of the most famous and powerful poems of Iqbal about Islam. He wrote it when he visited Masjid-e-Qurtabaa in Spain; he lamented the fall of the Muslims and conjured up a vision of a bright future. The name of the Urdu Version of this book, 'Kissi Aor Zamaany Ka Khaawaab' has been borrowed from these lines

'We desperately need to undertake a thorough self-assessment and profound self-criticism. For the time being, we should forget 'others' and instead focus our full attention only on 'ourselves' and seriously analyze our miserable failings that have led to our downfall. We should also take stock of what is happening to us in the present times and that why is it happening?

'From the very beginning the caravan of humanity has been moving along the tide of time. If the pace of a people, race or nation slows down, the speeding communities leave it behind. As Keats would say: "A fresh perfection treads on thy heels." If any weak, backward looking nation faces a crisis, the advancing nations may stop for a moment and may express their sorrow but then they move on towards their destination. Same we observe in this mundane world. When a vehicle meets an accident, the other vehicles coming behind stop for a moment and then they start moving towards their destination. The owl of Minerva must continue its journey.'

Zafarullah Khan

'There is a need to remove the confusion of the Muslims about their religion. To do this, we have to go back to the one Islam, which the Prophet brought, and which is found in the Quran and the verified Hadith.'

Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

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